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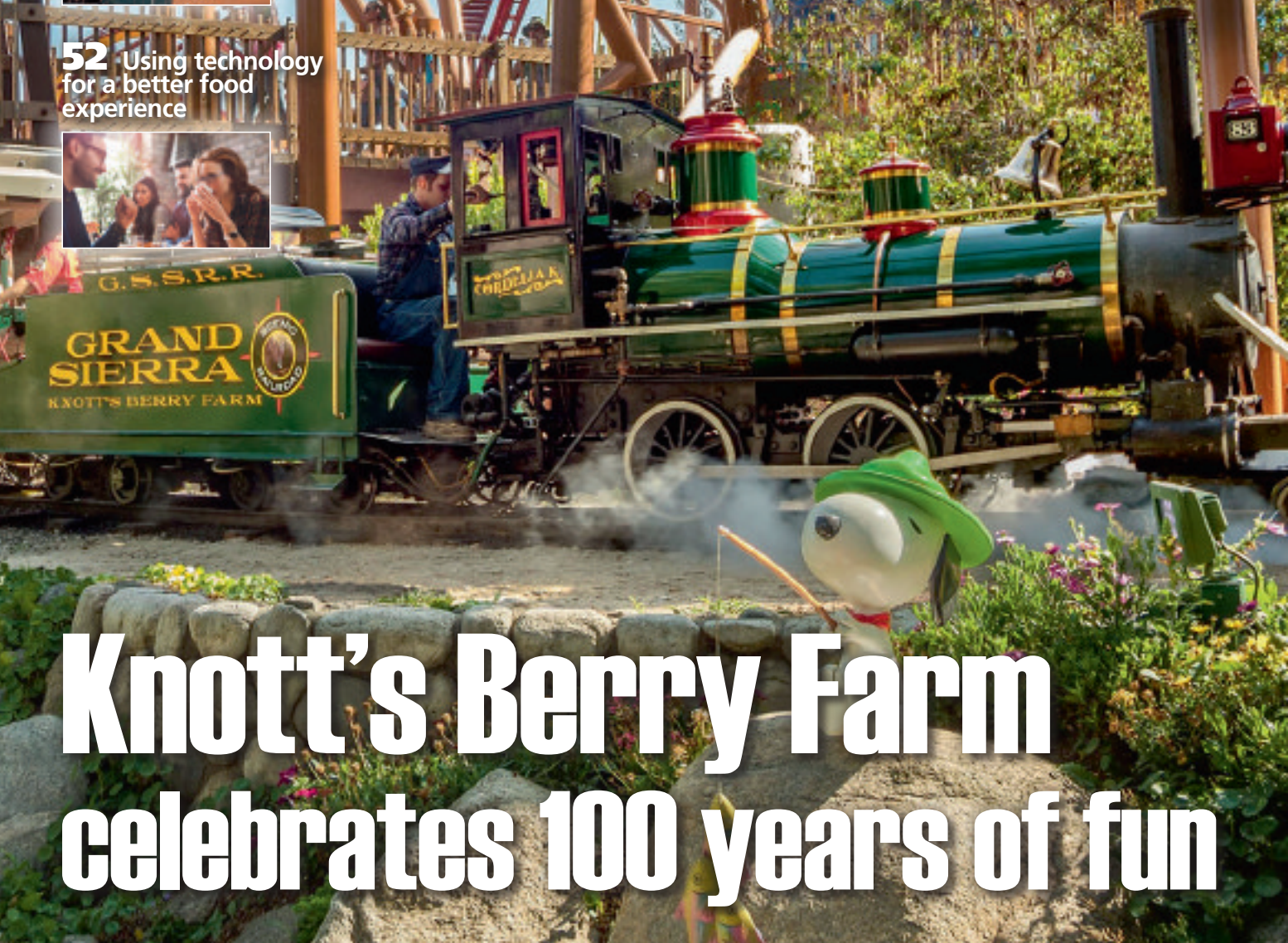
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*Open to Question*  
Louis Alfieri,  
Raven Sun Creative

Optimising efficiency  
to create a  
successful ride

*Park Life*  
Djurs Sommerland,  
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## ***A new challenge for parks and attractions***

Andrew Mellor **Editor**

OUR industry has faced a number of challenges over the years but for some time now, indeed for much of the past 10 years or so, it has enjoyed a particularly buoyant and successful period.

The development of new parks and other leisure destinations has continued apace, particularly in China and other Asian countries, adding yet further to an industry that attracts and entertains millions and millions of visitors every year. Growth in attendances has been predicted to continue its upward trend for the foreseeable future – but of course the big question for this year is will that actually happen now that the world is in the grip of the coronavirus outbreak.

At the time of writing, more than 90,000 cases of the virus had been reported around the world with more than 3,000 deaths. As we all know, it is now on every continent and governments globally are taking emergency measures to try and contain it as best they can. But no-one knows, of course, where it's all going to end up, how bad the spread will be and how it will impact economies, individuals, businesses and industry sectors as a whole.

Not surprisingly two major areas of concern for the authorities as they attempt to control the spread of the virus is in relation to travel and where people gather in large numbers. Overseas travel from certain parts of the world will inevitably raise the possibility of the virus being spread to more people, as will travel on public transport, so tourism as a whole will suffer.

Venues and locations where large crowds gather have also come under scrutiny as being likely places where the virus could be spread much more easily, so it is a very precarious position we find ourselves in at the present time. We've certainly discussed in our family whether or not to attend a couple of big indoor events that are coming up where very large crowds will be gathering. As always it's the "not knowing" scenario that makes it difficult to decide but perhaps taking precautions is the best way forward.

In the theme park and attractions industry we have already seen the postponing (again at the time of writing) of the China Attractions Expo which was due to be held in March and the DEAL show in Dubai, which again was scheduled for later in March. As the year moves on we will no doubt see other events being postponed or cancelled too, so in this respect alone the virus is already having an impact on the business.

But of course the truly big impact for many could well come when the traditional season gets under way in April, a time when so many parks around the world reopen. We are already very close to this period and as the situation worsens globally, the train of thought has to be that parks and other entertainment venues are likely to take a big hit when it comes to attendances.

Already in Asian country's we've seen the temporary closure of some Disney, Universal and other parks when the outbreak first occurred and although parks may not stay closed, the question is whether or not guests will want to visit, knowing they will be spending the day with large numbers of people and in very close proximity to them. Potentially it could be a difficult time for many operators but there seems to be little they can do about it. For now, all we can do is wait and see how the situation develops.

**IAAPA has various member resources available for coronavirus (COVID-19). Visit [www.iaapa.org](http://www.iaapa.org) for more information.**

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## Calendar

### March 12-14

RAAPA Expo 2020, Pavilion 75, VDNH, Moscow, RUSSIA  
Contact: RAAPA, PO Box 74, Moscow, 129343, RUSSIA  
Tel: +7 495 234 5233  
Email: raapa@raapa.ru  
www.raapa.ru

### May 10-12

2020 Asia Amusement & Attractions Expo (AAA), China Import & Export Fair Complex (Area A), Guangzhou, CHINA  
Contact: Tina Chang, Guangdong Grandeur International Exhibition Group  
Tel: +86 20 2210 6418  
Fax: +86 20 8257 9220  
Email: sales@grandeurhk.com  
www.aaaexpos.com

### May 18-20

AALARA 2020 Conference, Sea World Resort, Gold Coast, AUSTRALIA  
Contact: AALARA, Suite 9, McDonald House, 37 Connor Street, Burleigh, Qld 4220, AUSTRALIA  
Tel: +61 7 5520 7717  
Email: info@aalara.com.au  
www.aalara.com.au

### June 9-11

IAAPA Expo Asia, The Venetian Macao, Macau, CHINA  
Contact: IAAPA, Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32819, USA  
Tel: +1 407 221 5388  
Fax: +852 2538 8908  
Email: ExhibitSales@IAAPA.org  
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-asia

### June 15-17

DEAL 2020, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE  
Contact: International Expo-Consults (IEC)  
Tel: +971 4 343 5777  
Email: deal@iecdubai.com  
www.dealmiddleeastshow.com

### June 22-24

CAE Beijing 2020, China International Exhibition Centre, Shunyi New Venue, Beijing, CHINA  
Contact: Lily Zhang, L&A International Ltd., 6 Penmere Grove, Sale, Cheshire, M33 4FP, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)161 610 0022  
Email: lily@leisureandattractions.com  
www.leisureandattractions.com

### August 5-6

Fun Asia Expo, Hall D2, Jakarta International Expo Kemayoran, INDONESIA  
Contact: PT. Fun International, Suite 430, Gedung Pusat Niaga, Arena Pekan Raya Jakarta, Kemayoran, Jakarta Pusat 10620, INDONESIA  
Tel: +62 21 2664 5386  
Fax: +62 21 2664 5385  
Email: info@funasiaexpo.co.id  
www.funasiaexpo.co.id

### September 9-11

GTI GUANGZHOU 2020, Area A, China Import and Export Fair Pahou Complex, Guangzhou, CHINA  
Contact: Haw Ji Co. Ltd./Game Time International  
Tel: +86 20 8126 9851  
Email: gametime@taiwanslot.com.tw  
http://www.gtiexpo.com.tw/cncht/index.php

### September 22-24

IAAPA Expo Europe, ExCel Exhibition Centre, London, UK  
Contact: IAAPA, 9205 Southpark Centre Loop, Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32819, USA  
Tel: +43 2216 2915/+1 321 319 7600  
Email: ExhibitSales@IAAPA.org  
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-europe

### October 17-19

CAE Shanghai 2020, Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Centre, Shanghai, CHINA  
Contact: Lily Zhang, L&A International Ltd., 6 Penmere Grove, Sale, Cheshire, M33 4FP, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)161 610 0022  
Email: katie.w@chinaattractionsexpo.org  
www.chinaattractionsexpo.org

### November 11-12

Family Attraction Expo, NEC Birmingham, UK  
Contact: 4 Colston Ave., Bristol, BS1 2NT, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)117 929 6087  
Email: cary.frame@prysmgroup.co.uk  
www.familyattractionexpo.co.uk

### November 18-20

MAPIC, Palais des Festivals, Cannes, FRANCE  
Contact: Reed MIDEM 27 Quai Alphonse Le Gallo, CS 10026 Boulogne, FRANCE  
Tel: +33 179 71 95 15  
Email: Daniela.jakovljevic@reedmidem.com  
www.mapic.com

### November 17-20

IAAPA Attractions Expo, Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida, USA  
Contact: IAAPA, 9205 Southpark Centre Loop, Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32819, USA  
Tel: +43 2216 2915/+1 321 319 7600  
Email: iaapa@IAAPA.org  
https://www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo

 Additional copies of **InterPark** distributed at these events.

As dates sometimes change, please check with organisers before visiting international trade events.

**Postponed**



**This year's IAAPA Expo Europe will take place at the Excel exhibition centre in London, England, from September 22 to 24**



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## Bob Chapek replaces Bob Iger as Disney CEO

BOB Iger has stepped down as CEO of the Walt Disney Company. The position is being filled by Bob Chapek, who recently served as chairman of Disney Parks, Experiences and Products.

Iger (left) has assumed the role of executive chairman, directing Disney's creative activities, a position he will maintain until his contract

ends on December 31, 2021.

In a statement about the announcement, Iger commented: "With the successful launch of Disney's direct-to-consumer businesses and the integration of Twenty-First Century Fox well underway, I believe this is the optimal time to transition to a new CEO."

Iger added that he had the "upmost confidence" in Chapek and looks forward to "working closely with him over the next 22 months as he assumes this new role."

Chapek said: "I am incredibly honoured and humbled to assume the role of CEO of what I truly believe is the greatest company in the world."

Iger said he's stepping down as CEO so he can concentrate on the more creative side of the business.

## Six Flags theme parks given Certified Autism Centre status

ALL of Six Flags' 26 theme parks have become Certified Autism Centres (CAC), making Six Flags the first company to be awarded with CAC designation from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) in all locations.

The CAC designation from IBCCES requires that at least 80 per cent of staff that interact with visitors at a site have completed an autism training and certification programme. Staff must also complete audits on site and undergo ongoing training centred on understanding autism and the best strategies for enhancing communication, safety and guest experience.

As Certified Autism Centres, Six Flags theme parks will provide a sensory guide for every attraction and ride, trained team members who can accommodate the needs of visitors on the autism spectrum, special sensory spaces where guests can "take time out" in a less stimulating environment, an updated Accessibility Guide and expanded culinary options to meet special dietary needs.



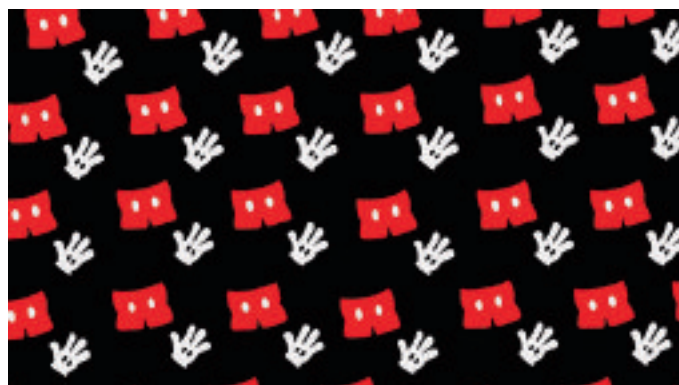
## PETA claims victory as SeaWorld ends dolphin riding

THE SeaWorld aquatic theme park chain will no longer exhibit certain stunts after a campaign by animal rights group PETA. Such stunts included trainers standing on the faces of the animals and riding their backs, but these exhibitions will now be phased out across all of SeaWorld Entertainment's theme parks.

PETA used the stock they own in SeaWorld Entertainment to make a shareholder proposal that called for an end to what they claimed to be "demeaning" performances. An online statement published by PETA said: "Victory! SeaWorld has stopped treating dolphins like surfboards and will soon stop making trainers stand on their faces in demeaning circus-style shows."

Dolphin surfing – which involves a trainer holding onto the dolphin's dorsal fin as it swims – had already been stopped prior to this latest development. Now SeaWorld says it will be phasing out the other practice of trainers standing on the noses (rostrums) of the dolphins as well. The phasing out process should take a few months.

## Play Disney Parks app's new AR Mickey Mouse message



THE Play Disney Parks app is introducing a new feature to reward guests who visit Walt Disney World. The app will send an augmented reality (AR) message starring Mickey Mouse to guests who stay three nights or longer at the resort during 2020.

The message is sent once the visitors have returned home and will consist of a special letter thanking them for their visit, as well as a QR code that provides access to a special AR animation of Mickey Mouse. The message also unlocks the exclusive "Thanks for the Magic" digital achievement that only visitors staying three nights or longer at the Disney Resort Hotel are eligible for.

The app already includes multiple interactive fun and games for family and friends before and during a visit to the resort and now offers a "magical" bonus for guests after they have returned home.

The Play Disney Parks mobile app is available in the Apple App Store for iPhones and the Google Play store for Android devices.





## Super Nintendo World on track for global expansion

SUPER Nintendo World, the theme park that is centred on the well-known video game franchises from Nintendo, looks set to be a feature in theme parks around the world.

The Mario-themed world is due to open at Universal Studios' park in Osaka, Japan, this summer. Nintendo World is also opening as part of Universal Orlando's new 570-acre theme park, Epic Universe.

The company has announced the popularity of Super Nintendo World is prompting the opening of the new parks across the globe. Further Super Nintendo Worlds are also set to open at Universal Studios Hollywood and Universal Studios Singapore.

A peep into what might be in store at Super Nintendo World Japan was recently showcased in a video fronted by English pop star Charli XCX. The video shows visitors interacting with the land via purpose-made wristbands and an app. The interactive nature of the world is to give visitors the feeling that they are physically participating in their own video game.

## International Theme Park Services to market Sbarro Pizzas

INTERNATIONAL Theme Park Services (ITPS) has announced a partnership that will see Sbarro pizzas introduced to theme and amusement parks, waterparks, family entertainment centres, aquariums and zoos.

ITPS is a leading independent, full-service consulting firm for the global leisure industry based in Cincinnati, Ohio. The company's founder and CEO, Dennis Spiegel, said of the Sbarro deal: "ITPS believes that the financial impact of bringing the quality of Sbarro to the theme park and attractions world can be substantial due to the global power of the IP and impact of the brand as one of the top pizza brands in the world."

Sbarro is a leading quick-serve pizzeria chain specialising in New York-style pizza sold by the slice, as well as other Italian-American cuisine. Sbarro and ITPS believe their partnership to be a perfect fit for the theme park and attractions industry, with operators being able to increase the menu variety on offer to their guests, ultimately improving profit margins.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

**EUROPE** The name has finally been announced for the new family coaster that is currently under construction at Bellewaerde in Belgium – Wakala. The new attraction is being built in the theme park's Canadian zone. The ride's name is in reference to a legendary figure of the Kwakiutl tribe of Canadian Indians. The tribe lives in the forests on the water banks of western Canada and uses canoes to travel around, which are a key element in the theming of the new attraction.

**US** ADG Mountainsides, a division of Aquatic Development Group, has been selected by the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA), to design and build a new mountain coaster. The downhill mountain coaster will be a new attraction at the Lake Placid Olympic Sports Complex at Mt. Van Hoevenberg. Known as the Mount Van Hoevenberg coaster, the attraction will be the longest such coaster in the United States.

**MIDDLE EAST** Ferrari World Abu Dhabi has launched Coaster Lab, an edutainment programme for schools that will last all year. The Coaster Lab initiative is designed to teach students about engineering, physics and technology through the lens of roller coasters. The aim of the project is to encourage a love of science by engaging participants in the analysis of roller coasters in a fun and memorable way. The programme is tailored to students at primary and middle schools. Pupils will also have the opportunity to participate in constructing their own replicas of rides and learn about the science behind coasters.

**WORLDWIDE** Kool Replay, provider of 100 per cent automated turnkey video solutions and developer of a proprietary system that uses connected capture technology to allow guests to take and share branded photos and videos, has teamed up with Connect&Go, a global leader of RFID deployments in the entertainment industry. Kool Replay will continue to develop its technology independently but will operate as a Connect&GO business unit. The companies will work together to grow the business, with the additional benefit of Connect&GO's experience and expertise in the industry.



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## New Nickelodeon adventure play experience opens at Lakeside

A new children's indoor adventure experience featuring themed play zones and a 4D cinema has opened at the intu Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock, Essex, UK.

The Nickelodeon Adventure Park is the first of its kind in the UK and covers an indoor area of over 50,000sq.ft. It has a capacity of 2,000 and incorporates four themed play zones in total, all featuring main characters from the Nickelodeon cartoon portfolio. These include those from SpongeBob SquarePants, Rugrats, PAW Patrol and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

There is also a Nick Central zone where kids can enjoy monster machine racing, colourful climbing tubes and a create-your-own-constellation experience starring Dora the Explorer.

As well as the themed zones and 4D cinema, the Nickelodeon Adventure Park features a café and gift store and several private party suites for hire, while costumed characters roam the play park to enhance everybody's experience throughout the day.



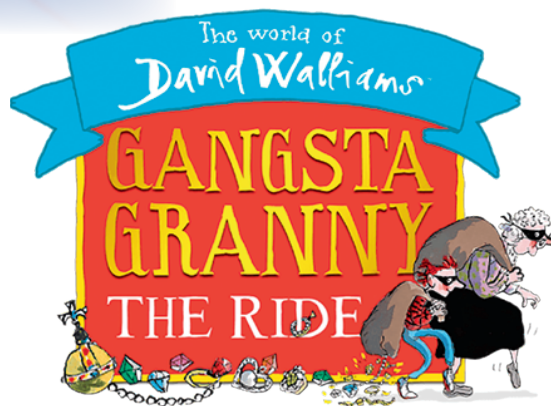
## Pleasure Beach Great Yarmouth gears up for arrival of white-knuckle ride

THE Pleasure Beach in Great Yarmouth, UK, is preparing for the arrival of a new £500,000 white-knuckle ride.

Known as Lighting 360 it is being custom-built in Italy for the park. The attraction sits on a tower and features eight arms that support a two-seater plane on each, which can turn 360° and are controlled by the user.

The ride's name derives from a fighter plane from the Second World War named Lightning 360. It will replace the caterpillar-themed Mulan ride at the park, which closed in 2019 after more than 20 years' of operation.

Albert Jones, managing director at the Pleasure Beach, commented on the ride: "It's going to be a unique experience. We have to make sure everything is as it should be. We are racing against time, but the plan is to get the ride in time for Easter. At the moment it's on schedule."



## Alton Towers commences 40th anniversary celebrations with opening of Gangsta Granny: The Ride

2020 is the 40th birthday of Alton Towers and to celebrate, the much-loved theme park has announced a series of special events. The 40th anniversary party commences with the opening of Gangsta Granny: The Ride.

The innovative 4D ride experience is centred on David Walliams' children's book Gangsta Granny. The attraction features 3D projection mapping, state-of-the-art special effects and animation inspired by the work of British children's books illustrator, Tony Ross.

Gangsta Granny: The Ride is part of The World of David Walliams, a new zone at Alton Towers featuring a number of rides and attractions, including Raj's Bouncy Bottom Burp, Raj's Shop and the Royal Carousel. Gangsta Granny: The Ride was scheduled to open at The World of David Walliams on March 21, 2020.

The May half-term will see a Gangsta Granny-themed Half Term Heist take place at the park, where visitors can take part in different challenges, activities and competitions.

## Toverland enjoys record guest numbers for 2019

TOVERLAND theme park in the Netherlands enjoyed another record number of visitors during 2019. It is the second year in a row the venue has seen a record-breaking visitor count.

Last year 862,000 people visited the park in Sevenum, a town in the south eastern part of the country. That is an increase of 50,000 visitors compared to 2018, which itself saw a massive spike in visitor numbers from 2017.

Toverland's general director Jean Gelissenn Jnr., said: "We are extremely proud of this increase in visitor numbers. We have made huge investments in areas like expansion and park events. Therefore, it is great to see that we are doing the right thing, which is backed-up by our visitor numbers and a guest rating of 9+."

The surge in visitor numbers is likely down to several factors, including the opening of a new themed area called Avalon in the summer of 2018,

which also helped to bump that year's visitor numbers up. There is a new entrance called Port Laguna, plus the huge investment also saw the size of Toverland increase by one-and-a-half. The park hosts multiple popular events through the year which also contribute to attracting more and more guests.





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## Final touches being made to Gulliver's Valley in Yorkshire

GULLIVER'S Valley, the new theme park that is due to open in the spring next to Rother Valley Country Park in Rotherham, Yorkshire, UK, is currently undergoing its finishing touches.

The £37m (US\$47.3) theme park will feature more than 70 rides and attractions, with one key area being a Lost World zone with animatronic dinosaurs. It will be the fourth Gulliver's theme park in Britain and is designed for children aged two to 13. As well as the Lost World zone, other attractions will include an interactive soft play area, a spinning coaster, laser tag and a water play area.

So far, 11 rides have been confirmed at Gulliver's Valley, including a T-Rex Tower splash ride and River Tour, both in the Lost World section. Blackbeard's Barrels will be located in the Smugglers Wharf, where the Ghostly Galleon boat ride can also be found. There will also be a Lilliput Land carousel, a Toyland Ferris Wheel and Frantic Fire Trucks, where youngsters will be able to sample what it's like to be a firefighter by squirting water jets at "burning" buildings.

Other rides will include Apache Falls, Prairie Ponies, the Sioux City Express and Desperado Drop, all located in Western World.

An official opening date for the park has not yet been set but the park is expected to open in the spring.



## AromaPrime launches theme park fan collection

THEME park scent-creation specialist AromaPrime is launching a new collection of themed scents that customers can buy to recreate the special smells and odours they associate with their favourite theme park experiences.

It is known that our smell receptors are connected to the part of our brains that process emotions, trigger memories and influence behaviours, with theme parks long employing special scents at their attractions to enhance the guest experience. Now theme park fans will be able to purchase a collection of these scents to reminisce and relive their fun in the comfort of their own homes.

The Theme Park Fan Collection will launch with scents used by the well-known Thorpe Park Resort in Surrey, England. The initial collection includes the exact same smells the park employs to enhance the visitor experience within their Creek Freak Massacre scare maze, the Platform 15 scary train ride, the Containment escape room and the Fright Nights cinema.

Other scents from theme parks all around the world will be released in new collections soon. There will also be a mini-dispenser available for purchase alongside the scent collections.



## Funtime Group introduces Booster Unhinged ride

ONE of the world's leading designers and manufacturers of extreme thrill rides, the Funtime Group, recently introduced an even more extreme version of its famous Booster ride at Prater Park in Vienna, Austria.

The new Booster Unhinged now has guests experiencing three separate motions all at once from their unique individual seating. With completely unobstructed views, thrill-seekers experience the rotation of the main boom along with the powered rotation of the seating rigs and the free-flipping gravitational motion of each individual seat.

The Prater Park site has been the Funtime Group's favourite location to debut new rides due to its proximity to their factory and general manager Hannes Lackner said of the new ride: "After over 20 years of success with our original Booster rides, Funtime felt the time had come to re-imagine the concept and deliver yet another dimension of thrills that our clients and fans expect from our company." Lackner added that the Booster Unhinged ride had so far exceeded all expectations.

## Black Mirror experience comes to Thorpe Park

THE world's first Black Mirror experience is coming to Thorpe Park in Surrey, England. The new ground-breaking attraction is inspired by the popular Black Mirror TV series.

Details of what the Black Mirror Labyrinth will entail have not yet been released, other than the maze will feature "cutting-edge visual technology" within "sensory-defying environments." The aim of those visiting the Black Mirror maze is to keep a grip on reality as an "unpredictable digitised dimension" attempts to suck them in.

Thorpe Park opens for the 2020 season on March 27 alongside the highly awaited Black Mirror experience.







Venetian Carousels



Dark Rides



Bumper Cars



Major Rides





## Jais Adventure Peak opens on the UAE's highest mountain

Jais Adventure Peak, a series of adventure attractions including zip lines, an all-new Sky Maze, a viewing deck and adventure centre, has opened on Jebel Jais, the highest mountain in the UAE, which boasts a summit of 1,934m.

Jais Adventure Peak was launched by the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority. One of the star attractions of the park is the Jebel Jais Flight, the longest zip wire in the world.

The Jais Sky Maze extends over two levels that are more than 10m above the ground. The maze comprises of a series of obstacles, including wobbly bridges, rope swings, swinging loops and more, designed for visitors of all ages. A team of experienced guides are on hand to help guests navigate their way through the maze.

Raki Phillips, CEO of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority, commented on the new adventure park. "The eagerly anticipated launch of the Jais Adventure Peak will not only add to the Emirate's diverse hospitality offering but will also elevate the undeniable appeal of Jebel Jais itself," he said. "The Jais Adventure Peak captures Ras Al Khaimah's adventurous spirit through a series of adrenaline-pumping experiences that will leave a lasting impression on our guests and unforgettable memories."

## New attractions at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi

THE award-winning Ferrari World Abu Dhabi theme park is introducing several exciting new attractions in celebration of its tenth anniversary later this year. The new attractions include a zip line and a roof walk experience.



A new dedicated Family Zone is also set to open in March and will include four state-of-the-art miniature versions of the park's most iconic attractions, including the Turbo Tower, Speedway Race, Flying Wings and a Formula Rossa Junior. The zone will feature a track with twists and turns as well as a diverse collection of thrilling rides and experiences for the whole family to enjoy, including small children.

The roof walk experience will involve guests scaling the park's iconic red roof, with the zip line attraction stretching for an impressive 400m in length.

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi's general manager, Bianca Sammut, said of the new attractions: "2020 is already shaping up to be a big year for the park with the much-anticipated countdown to our 10-year anniversary celebrations this November. It brings me great pride to welcome family attractions and new experiences that continue to provide entertainment for our guests."

Sammut also revealed that the park's award-winning Italian restaurant, Mamma Rossella, has just introduced a special kids' menu.

The new attractions join the ranks of the world's fastest roller coaster, Formula Rossa, and the record-breaking coaster, Flying Aces, in making Ferrari World Abu Dhabi one of the most exciting theme parks in the world. Other racing-related thrills offered at the park include Benno's Great Race, the Karting Academy and the Fiorano GT Challenge.

## Painting with Light kicks off first Qatar eSports WEGA Global Games

PAINTING with Light, the Belgian lighting and video design specialist, has helped kick off the opening ceremony of the first Qatar eSports WEGA Global Games with a hi-energy lighting scheme.

The grand opening of the games took place in the Khalifa Stadium in Doha and was attended by around 14,000 virtual gaming enthusiasts. The immersive spectacle showcased AR and VR technology, live arena performances, presentations by gaming influencers and e-athletics and plenty of entertainment.


The eSports WEGA Global Games features a series of gaming competitions, including Street Fighter V, CSGO, DOTA2 and eFootball PES. The grand opening ceremony commenced the eSports Games in style, with the help of Painting with Light, which was commissioned by Doha-based event company The Planners LLC.

The light design was centred on seven 16m-high towers, three located upstage and four downstage, to provide a sense of depth and the structural framework around the performance space, which was 80m wide and oval shaped. Holographic images were beamed onto huge special holo-screens and the stage surface was mapped for projections. The holographic images were distributed on different levels of all seven towers.

The cast comprised of dancers and flying characters, who worked in harmony with VR, the holographic images and hi-energy visuals. The eye-catching show narrated the story of how Qatar came to host the WEGA Global Games by recreating the unique universes from key tournament games such as Street Fighter and DOTA2.





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## Dollywood names Covenant Health as official health system partner

AWARD-winning theme park Dollywood has announced healthcare network Covenant Health as its official health system partner.

The partnership will see immediate upgrades made to the park's baby care facilities and nursing centres. The popular Calming Room will also receive new activities and equipment for the families using the room.

As part of the deal, Covenant Health will be presenting the new Flower and Food Festival and the Great Pumpkin LumiNights. It will also sponsor the theme park's safety team, Centralised Measuring, the Ride Accessibility Centre and all first aid stations and rental strollers.

The president of The Dollywood Company, Craig Ross, said: "For both Dollywood and Covenant, taking care of people is the number one priority. But it's not just caring for guests; it's about making them part of the family and treating them exactly as we would want to be treated."

Ross also revealed the new initiatives are just the beginning and both Dollywood and Covenant Health would be pursuing further opportunities together to improve the experiences and services available to guests.

Dollywood will be hosting the Covenant Health-sponsored Flower and Food Festival from May 8 to June 14 to celebrate the theme park's 35th anniversary.



## Final piece of Candymonium track placed at Hersheypark

THE final piece of track of the new roller coaster Candymonium has been laid at Hersheypark in Pennsylvania.

The Candymonium hypercoaster is part of a \$150m expansion of Hersey's Chocolatetown. Candymonium is the fifteenth coaster at Hersheypark and speeds around a 4,636ft track for a duration of two minutes and 26 seconds. Boasting a lift height of 210ft and reaching a maximum speed of 76mph, Candymonium will be the park's tallest and fastest coaster.

Hershey's Chocolatetown is a 23 acre development which is due to open this summer and on laying the last piece of track of the highly awaited ride, Hersheypark tweeted: "The final piece of chocolate brown track has been set on Candymonium."

As well as being home to the park's fastest and tallest ride, Hershey's Chocolatetown will feature the biggest themed restaurant in Hershey. Guests will also be able to enjoy refreshments at Milton's Ice Cream Parlour and the Sweeterie.



## Lego Movie World to debut in Legoland California

APRIL 1 this year will see the highly anticipated debut of Lego Movie World at Legoland California in Carlsbad.

The opening of the new, two acre Lego Movie World will be the biggest transformation Legoland California will have undergone in its history. One key attraction of the new world is Emmet's Flying Adventure, a triple-decker "flying" couch, which soars under a domed virtual screen that omits sensory experiences, including the spraying of saltwater, sweet smells and glitter.

Another focal attraction is Unikitty's Disco Drop, a tower ride which features a 30ft descent. Space fans will also be at home with Benny's Play Ship, a 40ft-tall space-themed playground structure with slides and more.

Other highlights of Lego Movie World include the Queen Whatevra Wa'nabi's Carousel and Emmet's Super Suite, where guests can meet-and-greet much-loved characters from the Lego movies.

## New Route 66 theme for Pacific Park roller coaster



THE owners of Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier in Los Angeles are giving their steel roller coaster a million dollar Route 66 makeover. Construction on the new look ride should take about six months, with the completed redesign ready for the summer.

The makeover will cost a little over \$1 million, with much of the re-conceptualisation focused on the loading station. The rebooted West Coaster will feature a new guest experience at the beginning of the ride, with the likes of special Route 66 memorabilia decorating the area, along with maps, old-timey gas pumps and license plates.

There will also be vintage-themed billboards throughout the track to enhance the guest experience during the ride. These will highlight certain roadside attractions, landmarks and landscapes, as well as towns and other places associated with Route 66. The coaster's cars will also receive a themed makeover.

Pacific Park's design and operations team have designed the new look, with the construction undertaken by Chance Rides from Wichita, Kansas.



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## Walt Disney World to transform Cinderella Castle

THE iconic Cinderella Castle at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom park is to undergo a major transformation in forthcoming months.

To mark the 70th anniversary of when Disney's animated film *Cinderella* was released, Disney shared a concept image of the new-look Cinderella Castle.

Talking about the transformation, Jason Kirk, vice-president of the Magic Kingdom, said: "*Cinderella* first transformed into a princess 70 years ago this week when the animated classic was released, and ever since, her courage and kindness have been inspiring guests and cast members alike. We are excited to share that her story has inspired a bold, shimmering and royal makeover of her namesake castle at the heart of Walt Disney World Resort."

Alterations to the castle will commence in the coming weeks and are expected to continue until the summer. The shows currently running at Walt Disney World, including Mickey's Royal Friendship Faire and Happily Ever After will continue.

Hong Kong Disneyland is also currently making alternations to its Sleeping Beauty Castle, including the installation of Disney Princess-themed towers.

## The Secret Life of Pets: Off the Leash! to feature 64 animatronics

UNIVERSAL Studios Hollywood has disclosed that its upcoming attraction The Secret Life of Pets: Off the Leash! is to feature 64 animatronics.

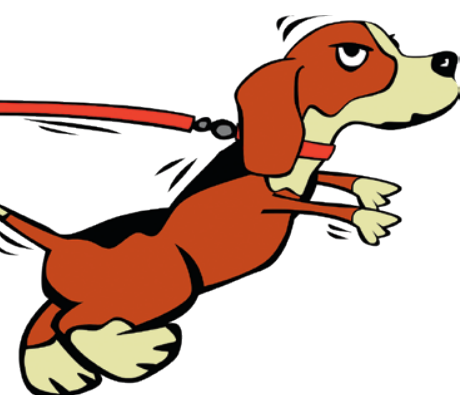
The 64 animated figures will be converted into living beings through real-life movements, such as the tilting and nodding of the head, blinking of the eyes, smiling and other mouth movement, as well as walking and twists of the torso.

The high-tech attraction will also feature state-of-the-art, optical enhanced gesture-tracking technology, which will identify visitors as one of 15 stray puppies.

A virtual line will enable guests to reserve a time to go on the ride to

avoid the need for queuing. The virtual line feature can be accessed via the Universal Studios app, or by the virtual line kiosk in the New York City subway station next to the ride.

The ride is themed on Illumination's *The Secret Life of Pets* franchise and will feature the well-known voices of the actors from the iconic films, including Kevin Hart as Snowball, Patton Oswalt as Max and Eric Stonestreet as Duke.



## Seven Seas Food Festival returns to SeaWorld Orlando

THE Seven Seas Food Festival is returning to SeaWorld Orlando for another year in 2020, giving visitors the opportunity to sample street food from around the world.

This year's festival will be held from February 7 until May 5, including every Friday. Visitors will be able to sample more than 180 international street food options. New to the 2020 Seven Seas Food Festival will be duck and mushroom ramen bowl, chicken and waffle and cricket crusted bison slider.

As well as tasting different delicacies from around the world, guests at SeaWorld Orlando will be able to enjoy live entertainment at the park every Saturday and Sunday at 6pm at the Bayside Stadium. Both the Food Festival and the live entertainment are included with theme park admission.

The entertainment line-up kicks off with Maddie and Tae on February 8 and concludes with Sean Paul on May 3.



## New marquee for Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railway

A NEW video published by Disney has revealed a new neon marquee for the Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railway attraction. The ride will be debuting in Disney's Hollywood Studios at the Walt Disney World Resort on March 4.

Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railway will be the first ride-through attraction centred on the Mickey and Minnie Mouse characters. It will be a family-friendly ride that takes guests inside a cartoon to have fun with Mickey and Minnie, as well as the lovable Goofy. The cartoon will be a brand new short called Mickey and Minnie's Perfect Picnic.

Construction on the ride is nearly complete and the sign for it can already be seen. With flashing lights and neon animations of Mickey and Minnie, it certainly promises to be lots of fun for all the family.

In the video published on the Disney Parks YouTube channel, the company's Imagineering art director, Phillip Hillis, says: "This marquee is so important to this attraction because this is Mickey and Minnie's first attraction. We want to make sure that we are providing an amazing marquee that really celebrates their entrance into a great attraction at Disney's Hollywood Studios."







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## Huss Park Attractions





## New monorails to open at Tokyo Disney Resort

NEW monorails are opening at Tokyo Disney Resort in May, including a new Type C monorail.

The design of the new monorails is in-keeping with the style of those currently operating on the Disney Resort Line, with a two-colour graduation to resemble softy-flowing waves on the sides of the trains. The carriages also boast larger Mickey Mouse windows designed to improve travellers' viewability of the park.

Inside, the monorails have a bigger width and height and lengthened seats to improve boarding and unloading procedures. Wide spaces have been added to the third and fourth cars of each train and a freestanding space has also been allocated on each vehicle to accommodate guests with wheelchairs.

Also new to the upgraded monorails are Mickey Mouse shaped handles which have been installed at different height levels so both children and adults can use them. The observation areas on the new trains are also positioned so that visitors in wheelchairs can use them.

The first of the five new monorail trains will open at Tokyo Disney resort on May 21, with the remaining trains being rolled out by 2024.

## Construction underway for Cloud Coaster at Vinpearl Land Phu Quoc

EXTREME Engineering, a world leader in the design and manufacture of adventure attractions, has announced its Cloud Coaster attraction is currently being installed at Vinpearl Land Phu Quoc, Vietnam.

The attraction features jungle theming and immerses guests on a high-altitude journey that provides memorable views of the whole of the theme park. The ride has a track length of around 122m.



The installation will be the largest outdoor Cloud Coaster project that Extreme Engineering has worked on in Asia. Because of the climate in Vietnam, custom paint coatings and finishes are required on the attraction in order to maintain its condition.

The coaster boasts a bright green design, so it blends in with the design of the rest of the park. Phil Wilson, executive vice-president of Extreme Engineering, commented: "We were able to find a way to fit the coaster in a very tight space, minimising the impact on required real estate from the park. The Cloud Coaster was designed to allow post-install anchoring, eliminating heavy-duty construction costs that you would typically experience on other attractions."

The family suspended coaster is due to open at Vinpearl Land Phu Quoc later in 2020.

## Sky Trail attractions set to open in South Korea



TWO Sky Trail aerial attractions are due to open in South Korea in April this year.

Thanks to the efforts of RCI Adventure Products' global partners Climb Korea Co. Ltd. and Zipline Korea, Inc., the family-friendly attractions were recently installed in the Mt. Yonghwa Recreational Forest in the city of Chuncheon and at the Alpensia Resort in Pyeongchang respectively.

The Complex Experience Centre in the Mt. Yonghwa Recreational Forest features a combination of climbing walls, a zip coaster and the soon-to-open Sky Trail with its own Sky Rail. The indoor attraction comprises of seven poles, two levels and 21 interactive elements, including the bumpy rope walk and swinging steps.

Daysik Woo, head of international business at Climb Korea, commented: "The Sky Trail is an attraction that exhibits precise safety and design which is new to Korea. Through the entire process, Dan Mooney, RCI director of international sales, has been very supportive and we look forward to collaborating on additional projects in the future."

The Alpensia Resort provides visitors with access to golf courses, a cinema, hotels and a spatial ski resort. As from April 2020, visitors will be able to enjoy the Sky Trail attraction which comprises of five poles, two levels, extends to 19ft (5.8m) upwards and features elements including a suspended bridge and an angled vertical rope ladder.

Jeff Jung, president and CEO of Zipline Korea, Inc., said: "Alpensia Resort is very large with a wide range of attractions available. The Sky Trail will be a great addition for groups, especially the student groups who usually visit the area from spring to fall."

"Many people in South Korea are looking for indoor play areas and I think there will be a steady demand for RCI products in the future," Jung added.





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## Harry Potter theme park due to open in Tokyo in 2023

A NEW theme park based on the popular book and movie franchise Harry Potter, is set to open in Tokyo in 2023.

It is believed that the Japanese holding company, Seibu Holdings, is in talks with Warner Bros. and the Tokyo Metropolitan government to finalise the agreement.

The Harry Potter theme park will be built on the site of the Toshimaen amusement park, which is being closed in stages after 2020. Having opened in 1926, Toshimaen is one of Tokyo's oldest amusement parks. The various attractions at the venue, as well as the site's swimming pool, will close in stages over an extended period.

The site is owned by Seibu Holdings and it is said that Warner Bros. is planning on borrowing a section of the 200,000sq.m site to build the Harry Potter theme park. The remainder of the site is likely to be purchased by the Tokyo Metropolitan government, which plans to convert the area into a large park.

The Harry Potter theme park will feature sets from the movies which visitors can tour, similar to London's Warner Bros. Studio Tour – The Making of Harry Potter.



The Chinese Spring Festival was held shortly after the resort was recognised as an ASEAN Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) venue during an award ceremony that took place in Brunei Darussalam on January 18.



## Tokyo Disney theme parks temporarily close due to coronavirus

TOKYO Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea were closed from Saturday, February 29, until March 15 due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Tokyo Disney Resort's operator, Oriental Land Co., announced that the decision to close its parks was in line with the government's request to cancel or postpone large events for two weeks.

This was the first time Tokyo's popular theme parks had closed since an earthquake and subsequent tsunami devastated north eastern Japan in 2011.

The entertainment and shopping complex known as Ikspiari that is adjacent to the theme parks was also closed during the same period. Oriental Land Co. said that the monorail and hotels run by its group companies would remain in service.

Guests who had purchased tickets to the theme parks within the weeks of closure were to be issued full refunds or extensions to the tickets' expiry dates.



## Jpark Island Resort and Waterpark welcomes Lunar New Year with ambitious goals

JPARK Island Resort and Waterpark Mactan, Cebu on the island of Mactan in the Philippines, has welcomed the Lunar New Year in by announcing bigger, more ambitious goals.

Jpark Island Resort and Waterpark is the country's only five star resort and waterpark and there are big plans in the pipeline for the site. Justin Uy, the resort's chairman and president, said an additional 252 new rooms will be launched at the hotel in 2020, bringing the total number of rooms available to 820. An international five star rooftop dining terrace will also be built on top of the resort's showrooms and boardrooms, as well as an infinity pool.

On January 29, a Chinese Spring Festival was held at Jpark Island Resort and Waterpark to welcome the Lunar New Year. The event was filled with traditional lion dancing followed by guests dining on the traditional Cantonese-style dish known as Yee Sang Toss, eaten to symbolise abundance and prosperity.





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## Hong Kong Disneyland's vacant sites to be used as coronavirus quarantine facilities

HONG Kong Disneyland is lending its vacant sites to the Chinese government so they can be used as quarantine facilities to help eliminate the spread of coronavirus.

As officials consider how to bring people from Hong Kong that are stranded in Wuhan back "in batches," it has been announced that the government will make use of a 60 hectare site reserved for the expansion of Hong Kong Disneyland.



Referring to the site reserved for the theme park's expansion on Lantau Island, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau chief Edward Yau Tang-wah said: "We have

secured the company's consent to use part of the site if it is needed. We need all quarantine facilities for surveillance. Basically we will leave no stone unturned [when identifying sites for building quarantine facilities]."

There are also 2,200 Hong Kong residents stranded in the Hubei province, 10 of which are confirmed to have been infected with the virus. The government has announced it needs to have sufficient quarantine facilities in place in order to bring the residents back to Hong Kong.

## Ocean Park Hong Kong launches Redd's Nature Play Party channel on YouTube

OCEAN Park Hong Kong has launched an educational channel on YouTube called Redd's Nature Play Party. The channel publishes fun, animal-themed content designed to help children learn about animal welfare and conservation when at home.

The self-learning YouTube channel comes at a time when schools have been suspended in China due to the outbreak of the coronavirus. The platform features regular video footage by Redd, a member of Whiskers and Friends. The videos are focused on informing youngsters about environmental conservation and the eco system.

Josephine Woo, executive director, education and special projects co-ordinator at Ocean Park, commented: "Ocean Park is always closely connected to the local school community. We understand that ever since class suspension is put in place, parents and schools have been making huge efforts to ensure the learning progress as well as physical and mental well-being of children will not be affected."

Redd's Nature Play Party comprises of three different educational series – Play with Nature, Move and Dance and Art and Crafts Workshops.



## Meet IAAPA Event in Beijing cancelled

THE planned Meet IAAPA event in Beijing on March 22 has been cancelled. The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) announced its decision based on caution amid the coronavirus outbreak and the travel restrictions that have been subsequently put in place by the Chinese authorities.

Meet IAAPA are popular attractions industry networking events hosted by IAAPA, which has around 5,300 amusement industry members in over 100 countries around the world. These events are held worldwide to bring attractions industry professionals together for valuable networking sessions and insightful presentations, as well as to enjoy some exciting entertainment.

IAAPA has been encouraging its members to sign-up to its exclusive and free Security Advisory Programme which will provide regular updates and information about global security issues, including important alerts about the coronavirus outbreak. It said that the health and safety of members, guests and employees is its top priority and it will be actively monitoring the latest developments concerning the outbreak, while closely following updates from news outlets around the world as well as recommendations from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

## Universal Beijing Resort scheduled to open in May 2021



UNIVERSAL Beijing Resort is scheduled to open in May 2021, the Beijing municipal government has announced, despite the coronavirus outbreak.

The theme park is on target to have completed construction by the end of 2020. According to Universal Beijing, the main structure of the site has been completed and the rides and attractions are now being installed. The building of the NHU Resort Hotel, Universal Studios Grand Hotel and Universal CityWalk Beijing is also underway.

Tom Mehrmann, president of Universal Beijing, commented: "2019 was full of excitement, success and rapid development. We hope to bring even more exciting news for everyone in 2020."

In 2019 it was revealed that the immersive lands at Universal Studios Beijing will comprise of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Minion Land, Transformers: Metrobase, Kung Fu Panda Land of Awesomeness, Jurassic World Isla Nublar, Hollywood and WaterWorld.

## CAAPA's former secretary general Feng Yuguo passes

The China Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (CAAPA) has issued an obituary to its former secretary general Feng Yuguo, who passed away on February 24, 2020, at the age of 66.

Feng Yuguo died from an illness in Peking University Shougang Hospital and many of his colleagues within the industry have expressed their sadness at his passing.

Feng joined CAAPA in 2000. Prior to becoming the organisation's secretary general and director of the Advisory Committee, he had been an editor of the publicity department. Feng Yuguo had always been passionate about the amusement industry and during his 20 years working in the sector, he witnessed first-hand the development of the amusement industry in China. His passion and commitment contributed to the sustainability of the industry.





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# WATERPARKS

## Kings Dominion's Coconut Shores to undergo renovation

THE Coconut Shores water play area for children at the Kings Dominion Soak City Water Park in Virginia is to receive an exciting redesign. The renovation project is being undertaken by the Aquatic Development Group (ADG) and should be ready for visitors to enjoy by May this year.

The new Coconut Shores will be bigger thanks to ADG's innovative design methods, with the incorporation of an underused 35,000sq.ft wavepool nearby that will allow them to build two new attractions.

The first new attraction will consist of a multi-level play structure with over 200 interactive water features and multiple kid-friendly slides. ADG will also install its trademarked Mini Harbour water ride attraction, essentially a miniature wavepool powered by ADG's WaveTek technology and featuring waves up to 12 inches high.

"We are very excited to watch the Kings Dominion Coconut Shores project come to life," said ADG's president, Jim Dunn.

Adult visitors can also enjoy a new dining experience with various cuisines and cocktails available, with parents able to supervise their kids from a selection of chaise lounges in the newly renovated spaces of Lighthouse Landing and Sand Dune Lagoon.



## Legoland Waterpark Gardaland to feature Beach Party attraction

ONE highlight of the soon-to-be-opened Legoland Waterpark Gardaland in Italy goes by the name of Beach Party. Beach Party is to comprise of interactive play areas on multiple levels, a waterspout and climbing areas, offering fun in the water for all the family.

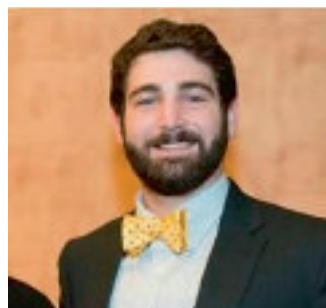
Within the play area will be seven slides all of varying heights and lengths to cater for visitors of all ages. Another key feature will be a huge 1,500-litre water bucket, which will sporadically spill over visitors.

A total of five Lego figures will be present in the area, each representing a different Lego character inspired by the theme of water and fun. Other features include a series of surfers, a girl in a Hawaiian costume and a lifeguard sitting in a turret. The Beach Party attraction is being built by the Canadian water ride manufacturer, WhiteWater.

Due to the mild weather, construction of the waterpark is well underway and the 15,000sq.m area is set to open at the end of May.



## Quassy appoints George Frantzis III as HR director



QUASSY Amusement and Waterpark in Middlebury, US, has named George Frantzis III as the company's new human resources director.

Frantzis, 27, is the fourth generation of family members to work at the amusement and waterpark site, which was purchased by his great-grandfather, John Frantzis, along with two business partners in 1937.

From 2010 to 2015 George Frantzis III worked as a ride supervisor at the lakeside facility. Talking about the appointment, Frantzis said: "Small family businesses are the foundation of a great economy. My position specifically deals with creating great entry-level opportunities for our employees and providing an excellent experience for our customers. I'm extremely proud to be a part of the team again!"

The amusement ride area of Quassy opens for the 2020 season on April 25. Splash Away Bay waterpark and Quassy Beach are due to open on May 23.

## New water coaster to open and Holiday World and Splashin' Safari



HOLIDAY World and Splashin' Safari, the theme park and waterpark in Santa Claus, Indiana, US, is getting ready for the launch of its new water coaster this spring.

In the pipeline for the waterpark is Cheetah Chase, a duelling water coaster featuring two rafts travelling simultaneously. The launched water coaster uses hydro blast technology over a 1,700ft. track. Crews at Holiday World and Splashin' Safari are building a 68,000 gallon balancing tank designed to recirculate the water that is used for the attraction.

Talking about the preparation of the highly awaited new water coaster, Matt Eckert, Holiday World's president and CEO, said: "A lot of people think that once our gates close at the end of the year we flip a switch off and flip it right back on in May and we're ready to go. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes."

Cheetah Chase will officially open at the park on May 7.





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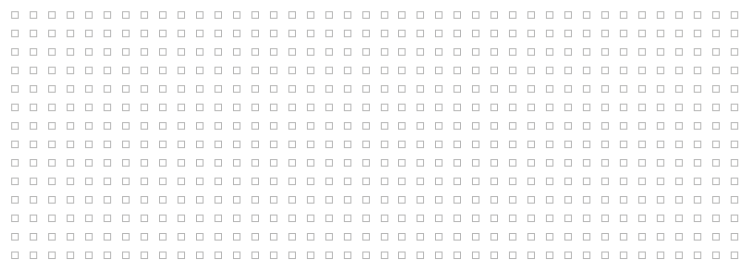
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## ProSlide showcases range of world-class rides at SEA

PROSLIDE Technology, a world leader in the design and manufacture of water rides and attractions, showcased a series of world-class rides at the Saudi Entertainment and Amusement show (SEA) 2020.

SEA took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from February 3 to 5. During the event, ProSlide exhibited a number of its newest and most innovative rides and attractions, installed at leading waterparks around the world.

Such attractions include the rides at Rulantica at Europa-Park, Europe's newest waterpark, which features a number of ProSlide creations, including the CannonBOWL, the Duelling PIPEline and the TornadoWAVE 60.

Among projects for this year, a new ProSlide water ride is opening at Holiday World in the United States in May. Known as the Cheetah Chase, the ride is the world's first Duelling Launch Water Coaster featuring ProSlide's RocketBLAST technology.

## Plans for waterpark on Circuit of The Americas racetrack announced

AN indoor and outdoor waterpark and an 11-storey hotel are being proposed for construction at the Circuit of The Americas F1 racing track in south east Austin.

The vast hotel complex would be home to a 100,000sq. ft. indoor waterpark, a 34,000sq. ft. ballroom, meeting room space and 350 rooms.

In August 2018, executives at the Circuit of The Americas announced plans to rezone the 1,155 acre site to enable further development around the Formula One racetrack, soccer stadium and concert venue. The hotel and waterparks would be built to the west of the racetrack across the Circuit of the Americas Boulevard.

Rocky Williams, vice-president of hotel developer Arm Epic Lodging Partners, commented: "The waterpark and hotel complement the family entertainment components that already exist at the circuit – the races, concerts, amusement rides, soccer games and conventions."

In addition to the waterpark and hotel, plans are also in motion to construct a children's amusement park at the site, which will complement the complex's existing karting track, KOTA Karting.



## Cedar Fair announces record attendance and revenue in 2019

CEDAR Fair, a leader in regional amusement parks, waterparks and immersive entertainment, has announced 2019 was an extremely successful year for the company, reporting record attendance and revenue results.

Net revenues in 2019 reached \$1.47 billion, a 9 per cent increase on 2018. The rise in revenue has been attributed to a five per cent increase in attendance, equating to a record 27.9 million guests. Significant gains in attendance can also be credited to a record performance at Cedar Fair from July until October, as well as a highly successful season pass programme.

Richard Zimmerman, president and CEO of Cedar Fair, commented on the company's successful year, saying: "We are extremely pleased with our 2019 season, which was the most successful year in Cedar Fair's history. The initiatives within our long-range strategic plan, which focused on broadening the guest experience through more immersive attractions and entertainment, are clearly resonating in our markets."



## New waterslide at Aquatica San Antonio

SEAWORLD'S Aquatica waterpark in San Antonio, US, is launching a new waterslide experience to join the many other thrills on offer.

The Tonga Twister will be 415ft. long and over 50ft. high and will be the first water ride in Texas to feature two exciting body slides designed with their own distinct twists and turns.

An interesting feature of the new slide will be the special AquaLucent tubes. They project lighting effects and patterns all around to create an electrifying light show that accompanies each guest as they enjoy the water-sliding experience. High-energy music will also be piped into the tubes to elevate the excitement levels even further as guests navigate the unique twists and turns.

The new waterslide joins Aquatica's many other attractions such as Wahalla Wave and Stingray Falls. The former was the first of its kind in America and the latter the first of its kind in the world featuring a family raft ride that takes guests on a winding adventure through an underground grotto where they can see tropical fish and the titular stingrays.

With SeaWorld launching its new season this month and announcing plenty of new rides and events throughout the year, its Aquatica waterpark was expected to feature something special too – and this new waterslide certainly fits that description.







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# The Wave, Coventry, UK

Project profile



OPENED in October 2019, The Wave indoor waterpark in Coventry, England, is something of a unique project for a number of reasons, but none more so than the fact that it has been built just a few metres from an historic site.

Located in the centre of the city of Coventry and part of the new Coventry City Centre Leisure Park, the venue is located alongside a church tower and spire built in the 1200s. The challenge of situating the new leisure offering in such a location was one that required unusual respect and specialised considerations from all involved, with designers, architects, contractors and suppliers all stepping up to the plate to ensure a successful outcome.

Built at a cost of £36.7m (US\$41.26m), FaulknerBrowns Architects were responsible for the design of the building, while other key contributors to the project included the main supplier and construction firm, the Buckingham Group Contracting, and consultant Neuman Aqua, both from the UK. All the water attractions within the complex were provided by

Turkey based Polin Waterparks, while Gantner Technologies provided the “in-house tech,” including wristband collection kiosks, digital turnstiles and cashless lockers.

The project is a game-changer in its distinctive design, the facility fitting into a very tight footprint on a site where Franciscan monks originally constructed a cruciform-shaped







church in the early 1200s. Over the years, the site's space became smaller and smaller as history left its marks (King Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in 1538 doomed the original building, leaving only the tower spire. The construction of nearby businesses slowly squeezed the borders of the only surviving edifice until the site's former occupant – an office building – was erected in the 1970s).

Accommodating a range of other leisure/sporting activities as well as the waterpark, the floorplan ultimately put the waterslides on the third floor, an unusual proposal. That meant Polin needed to specially adapt its rides to fit within the specific limitations of the building's mostly round layout and its constricting ceiling height.

"It wasn't an easy design," comments Polin's Sohret Pakis, "but it was incredibly fun to work on. It was challenging yet exciting to see the puzzle pieces of the slides match the required size needs and, finally, fit perfectly within the restrictions of the facility."

Accommodating six slides into such a tight space required some delicate design skills. For example, the bowl of one ride – Polin's Space Hole – sits right in the middle of





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*Liseberg*



## Project profile

Images courtesy  
Polin Waterparks/  
CV Life



the building and exits riders into a plunge pool on the floor below. The other slides also exit on the second floor and a spiral ramp helps guests navigate back to the third level.

Polin needed to incorporate the building's unique considerations into its slide designs. This meant specially designing several of the waterslides, such as creating a Mini Tsunami and a Navigatour with three uphill sections – one with and two without waterjets. It also meant designing all of the slides except for the Space Hole to incorporate dry-out exits without pools. And it meant restricting the heights of all of the slides. At this facility, then, the Space Hole is 14.62m (48ft) high, while the other five slides are 11.50m (37.72ft) high.

### The attractions Polin adapted for the waterpark include:

**Tunnel Bodyslide** (family slide) with Slide'n Roll special effects. This specially engineered ride delivers a long, smooth journey that combines all of Polin's most exclusive technologies – unique sound, lighting and design special effects – into one slide that creates an experience that fulfills the full range of sensory stimuli for guests.

**Sphere-Space Shuttle Combo.** Polin fused two of its rides to create this streamlined attraction that puts two riders on a raft that enters a steep drop and sends them speeding into both a sphere and a pod. In both, gushing water propels riders from side to side before exiting and expelling them downhill. Natural Light Effects (NLE) technology make this ride come alive with colour as light from outside the tubes interacts with water sluicing inside to create different light effects.

**The Space Hole.** Situated at the centre of the new leisure facility, this ride propels riders through an enclosed tube that exits into a huge, open bowl. Centrifugal force whirls riders







around the bowl's interior before they exit via a splash through the bowl's centre and drop into a plunge pool on the second floor. NLE technology adds extra drama to the ride.

**Mini Tsunami.** High-capacity is the feature of this waterslide that features a custom Coventry logo design on its exterior.

**Navigatour.** Riders slide along a 135m (443ft) path on this ride. Whether riding singly or with a friend, travellers slip in and out of the light as they experience a light show created by the slide's NLE technology.

**Looping Rocket.** This attraction features a "launch capsule" with a trap door that opens to send riders through a high-speed, horizontal, 360° loop. Translucent components allow other guests in the facility to watch riders shoot through the slide's tubes.

All of Polin's slides at the project are manufactured using Light Resin Transfer Molding (L-RTM) technology.

Additional attractions in the waterpark include The Reef, a children's area showcasing jets, fountains, a large tipping bucket, mini slides and a climbing area, a wavepool and a Lazy River.

The facility reaches out to all ages but its main target markets are predominantly families and students. Visitors come from within a 75 minute drive time from the city and capacities per session in the waterpark are up to 400 people per 25 hour session. A poolside café is another feature of the waterpark.

The Wave is operated by CV Life, which currently also manages Centre AT7, the Xcel Leisure Centre and the Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry. Paul Breed, chief executive for CV Life, said: "The whole team at CV Life were so excited to fully open the doors and invite the public to experience this fantastic waterpark. As the operators of this and other sport and leisure venues across the city, we knew how popular The Wave would become.

"Along with the waterpark, comes the state-of-the-art health and fitness suite, Les Mills gym classes and the tranquil Mana Spa – there is something for everyone."

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# How to choose the right attractions for your target market

By Danny Gruening, vice-president of marketing, Creative Works



ONE of the most important steps in establishing your family entertainment centre (FEC) is understanding your target market. Just as importantly, you need to understand which attractions appeal to these people. Researching your target market's interests and habits will help you determine which attractions will make the biggest impact on your customers. In this article, we'll break down different demographics, give details on their interests, habits and buying trends and then provide recommendations for how to choose attractions to engage these audiences

## The four active generations

There are four main generations that are socially active and enjoy going to FECs. They are Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers and they each vary in age, interests and hobbies. In order to choose attractions for each group, we must first understand the behaviours of the groups to find out what motivates their buying behaviours.

### Gen Z

The first and youngest generation we'll look at is Gen Z. This generation is made up of kids currently in junior high, high school and early college. This generation is characterised as entrepreneurial and tech savvy. They are very comfortable with digital technology and have used it for most of their lives. They prefer cool products over experiences and they are connected to digital devices for 10+ hours a day. They are young and therefore don't have much spending power alone. However, they have more influence on household

spending than any previous generation. If you want mom to spend money, get buy-in from her kids because they are a huge factor in purchasing decisions.

### Millennials

Older than Gen Z, Millennials are individuals whose ages range from young people exiting college to those in their mid 30s. Millennials value access, not ownership (e.g. ride share services). They look to their personal networks for buying decisions and they're currently the largest generation in the US labour force. They are also very tech-savvy and team-oriented. While they spend less in total dollars on out of home entertainment than other generations, they proportionally spend much more of what they earn. Plus, they are entering their prime discretionary spending years.

### Gen X

Gen X is the generation of people in their late 30s to mid 50s. This generation was the driving force in the shift of work/life balance. They use technology as a tool but they are not dependent on it. Gen X is closely tied to their Gen Z children and they spend more money on their children than they spend on themselves. They are looking for a single entertainment experience from start to finish; they don't want to "run errands" for entertainment.

### Baby Boomers

The final active generation we will look at is Baby Boomers. Baby Boomers make up the group of people in their mid 50s through retirement. They are the wealthiest generation,



which likely comes from their workaholic mindset. They are cool, calm and collected buyers; they carefully think through buying decisions before taking action. Baby Boomers are driven by facts, track records and dependability. Most importantly, they spend the most total dollars on leisure and entertainment compared to the other generations.

### Attraction recommendations

Now that we have an understanding of the different generations and their interests and behaviours, we can start to break down some common FEC attractions and see which generations they appeal to. These are high-level recommendations based on the common characteristics of each generation. This is not a list of concrete rules. There are always exceptions and every business and market is different, but these recommendations will help you get started on selecting attractions for your audience and your goals.

### Gen Z

Due to their knowledge and fascination with the digital world and technology, Gen Z is more than willing to pay for immersive experiences. Virtual reality caters to



their interests by combining technology with the social interaction found in location based entertainment venues. Virtual reality is something that most people can't get at home (at least not to the same extent), so they are willing to venture out and spend money on it.

A few years ago, not many people had heard of Esports. Today, Esports is one of the fastest growing industries. In 2019, global Esports revenues topped \$1 billion and that number will continue to climb for at least the next few years. FECs are using Esports to generate massive engagement through tournaments and leagues. But don't get caught thinking Esports are only for the young kids. The average age of a gamer today in the US is 35, so there are opportunities across the board with this attraction.

Gen Z is also interested in the online economy of "Instagrammable" moments. In their world, if they







didn't share pictures online, then it didn't happen. So it's important to facilitate "Kodak" moments where groups of friends can take selfies and capture their experiences. You can do this with just about any attraction, but themed laser tag arenas and mini golf courses in particular provide great opportunities for these moments.

Ropes courses and ninja courses are also great options for the younger members of Gen Z. Many FECs are putting in ropes courses to not only provide a fun experience, but also to increase capacity by installing them above arcades and other attractions.

## Millennials

For Millennials, entertainment is all about unique and social experiences. They are drawn to attractions that facilitate teamwork and social engagement with their friends. For this reason, escape rooms can often be a perfect fit for Millennials. As a tech-savvy group, they will be drawn toward escape rooms that use technology as part of the game experience.

When it comes to social interaction, bowling checks all of the boxes for Millennials. They get a chance to have a competitive game among friends while spending money on food and beverage. Bowling has made huge strides in technology recently and today's experiences have leather couches, touchscreen scoring monitors, lighting effects and even projection mapping.

The "Instagrammable" moments concept from Gen Z applies to Millennials as well. No matter what attractions you provide, make them memorable and give your customers a reason to share their experiences online.

## Gen X

Most of the attractions listed under Gen Z apply here as well, but not for the same reasons. As the parents of Gen Z, Gen X will likely accompany their kids and pay for their leisure activities. This is why they want a one-stop-shop







for entertainment. They can either join the kids for a family experience or sit down and enjoy a good meal while the kids run around.

Gen X doesn't value digital technology as much as younger generations. At the very least, they don't spend as much time with digital devices. They still want the amazing experiences, but they're less likely to take selfies and post them online.

If you want to book a lot of corporate and team-building events, this generation will likely make up a big portion of the company. For these kinds of events, you'll need attractions with high capacity and the ability to track scores for competition.

### **Baby Boomers**

Baby Boomers are the wealthiest generation so they don't mind paying more for longer lasting experiences. Since they carefully think through buying decisions and are driven by facts and data, they are less likely to try out newer, more technology-driven attractions. Instead, they tend to prefer more classic experiences that they've known for years, like bowling and mini golf. That being said, if they are spending time with their grandkids, they are more likely to try new experiences they otherwise would have ignored.

This conversation goes beyond the activities that most people associate with the word "attractions." It also includes food and beverage. A decade ago, most facilities could get by with a glorified "snack shack" concession stand. But consumers have higher expectations today. Good food will make it easier to get customers in the door and keep them there longer, especially the older generations like Baby Boomers.

### **Evolving interests**

This is certainly not an exhaustive list of attractions. There are countless options in the market, many of which can be great fits for multiple generations. Some of these include laser tag, go-karts, trampolines, arcades, axe throwing and mini golf.

When you understand who your target market really is and what drives their buying decisions, it becomes easier to understand which attractions will resonate with them. But once you make your attraction decisions, your job isn't done. The industry is constantly evolving and new attractions are always being developed. The highest performing FECs are always looking for new ways to enhance their facility and engage their customers.



# Knott's Berry Farm celebrates its first century of operations



California's oldest theme park Knott's Berry Farm celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2020.

*Beth Whittaker* takes a look at where it all began

THIS year, Knott's Berry Farm in the US will present A Knott's Family Reunion, a summer-long event paying tribute to the Knott family's transcendent history – celebrating the last 100 years of “memories in the making.”

A Knott's Family Reunion will see park guests immersed in a once-in-a-lifetime celebration featuring festive park décor, themed food items, unique entertainment, exclusive merchandise and special surprises along the way, all paying homage to the nostalgia that surrounds the historic theme park.

But where did it all begin? The first theme park to ever open in Southern California, the Knott family's American dream began in the berry fields of Buena Park from a curbside berry stand in 1920 and grew into the world-renowned theme park it is today. Nearly 100 years ago, the Knott family settled in the community of Buena Park and began

farming 20 acres of land on Highway 39, now known as Beach Blvd.

Around 1930, Walter (pictured below) and Cordelia Knott came upon what eventually Walter named the “boysenberry” – a cross between a loganberry, red raspberry and blackberry – a new hybrid originally developed by Rudolph Boysen, from whom the berry got its name. While Boysen had no luck bringing the berry to market, Walter acquired it from Boysen and did have market success – today, the roots of the boysenberry can be traced back solely to Knott's Berry Farm.



Walter picking berries



To make ends meet during the Great Depression, Cordelia Knott started selling jams and jellies made from Walter's boysenberries and in 1934, served her first chicken dinner meals on her very own wedding china, charging just 65 cents. Through word of mouth, locals and visitors from around the state began stopping by to enjoy the famous fried chicken dinner meals. To entertain the hundreds of customers lining up at the restaurant for a chicken dinner and to pay homage to the pioneering spirit of his grandparents, along with his love of the Old West, Walter built a working Ghost Town, this eventually becoming the first of Knott's Berry Farm's themed areas. The Knott's vision and imagination led to the creation of a further three themed areas that celebrate California's vast history and landscape.

Over time, Walter brought in relics from other deserted ghost towns to create Knott's Ghost Town as it exists today and which became the heart and soul of the park. The 1880's Old West Boom Town includes cowboys, gunfights, can-can dancers, stagecoaches, a steam train and panning for real gold. Also home to the newly re-themed Calico River Rapids, which first made an appearance in the park in 1960, more Ghost Town thrills can be found on Silver Bullet – a western-themed, steel, inverted roller coaster that suspends riders beneath the track and climbs to a height of 146ft.



Additionally there is the iconic GhostRider, the tallest, fastest, longest wooden roller coaster on the west coast. The ride looms 118ft over the historic Ghost Town and sees riders enter a mysterious mine and board gold, silver or copper mining cars before being sent galloping along over 4,500ft of twisting timber. The massive coaster includes 14 hills providing plenty of air-time throughout the nearly three minute journey.







For the ultimate thrill, guests can take a ride at night when every twist and turn is hidden in darkness. GhostRider has been routinely featured on lists of the best wooden coasters in the world since opening in 1998. In late 2015 through to spring 2016,

a complete track refurbishment was performed on the ride creating an improved ride experience with a smoother track and new trains.

Camp Snoopy is a themed area at Knott's Berry Farm designed just for small children. Home to Charles M. Schulz' Peanuts characters, the six-acre children's area features design elements that reflect a day at summer camp in the California High Sierras. The themed area features over 15 child-friendly attractions, such as Charlie Brown's Kite Flyers, Pig Pen's Mud Buggies and Linus Launcher, while for bigger children the modern Camp Snoopy classic Sierra Sidewinder sends riders through dips and turns, all while rotating on its axis.

The Fiesta Village pays tribute to California's Hispanic roots in a beautifully themed area containing Mexican-style architecture, food and eye-catching works of art. The themed area features park favourites such as Montezooma's Revenge, a shuttle coaster that sends riders forward and backward through a looped track, and La Revolucion,

which swings riders 64ft in the air. There's also Sol Spin, which brings hair-raising thrills to Fiesta Village by sending guests on a topsy-turvy spinning adventure over six storeys high, as they rotate in all directions in one of the ride's six spinning floorless gondolas.

As guests move through the park, they find the Boardwalk area, which pays tribute to the celebrated Southern California beach lifestyle and is home to the state's first dive coaster, HangTime. Towering 150ft over the Boardwalk area the ride showcases a beyond vertical drop that is the steepest in California at 96°, gravity-defying inversions and mid-air suspensions. HangTime transforms as the sun sets each night by illuminating the Boardwalk area with vibrant night time track chase lighting offering a spectacular view unlike any other.

The surfing themed roller coaster sends guests up a 150ft vertical lift hill before coming to a halt once the highest peak is reached, leaving riders suspended at the crest for several seconds at a 60° angle, giving the illusion of a disappearing track. Then the train suddenly descends into a beyond-vertical drop, through 2,189ft of steel track and five gravity-defying inversions.

The Boardwalk also features family coaster Coast Rider, Surfside Gliders, on which riders pilot their own two-person aircraft for a scenic view of Boardwalk Bay, and the classic Pacific Scrambler, as well as thrill-seeking rides such as Xcelerator and Supreme Scream.







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Remaining relevant and coping with changing times and trends is no easy task, particularly over a 100 year stint! But at Knott's Berry Farm, the team strives to ensure there is always something for everyone in the family to enjoy – with thrilling roller coasters and attractions, live entertainment, delicious food and an entire land dedicated to younger children; the park caters to a range of ages in order to keep families coming back time and time again.

As part of its continued commitment to providing guests with the highest quality entertainment, the park has several seasonal events throughout the year, such as the Boysenberry Festival, which celebrates the little berry that started it all, as well as over 10 coasters and numerous attractions.

"The Knott family vision and values led to the birth of Knott's Berry Farm and through this milestone celebration it is our opportunity to honour the last 100 years of remarkable memories that have shaped our history," says Jon Storbeck, general manager of Knott's Berry Farm. "The 100th anniversary celebration embraces the farm's rich history and signifies the importance of the Knott family's commitment to building a place for generations of guests to create lifelong memories."

Today, Knott's Berry Farm is owned and operated by Cedar Fair Entertainment Company and has evolved into one of Southern California's most popular theme park destinations combining world-class thrill rides with traditional family favourite attractions and entertainment. Knott's is also home to Knott's Soak City Waterpark, the full-service Knott's Berry Farm Hotel and Knott's Marketplace – featuring Mrs. Knott's Chicken Dinner restaurant. While this has grown into one of the largest in California, the classic fried chicken dinner is still made the same way today as it was when it first opened in 1934, using Mrs. Knott's recipes. A meal in this dining room means cozying up together in a booth inspired by the original seating arrangements and views of the hustle and bustle outside.

Through hard work and dedication, Walter and Cordelia Knott, along with their four children, created a special place for families to come together to build lasting memories. What started as a humble farm has evolved into a premier destination that has come to witness 100 years of historical and timeless memories shared among friends, neighbours and families from around the world.





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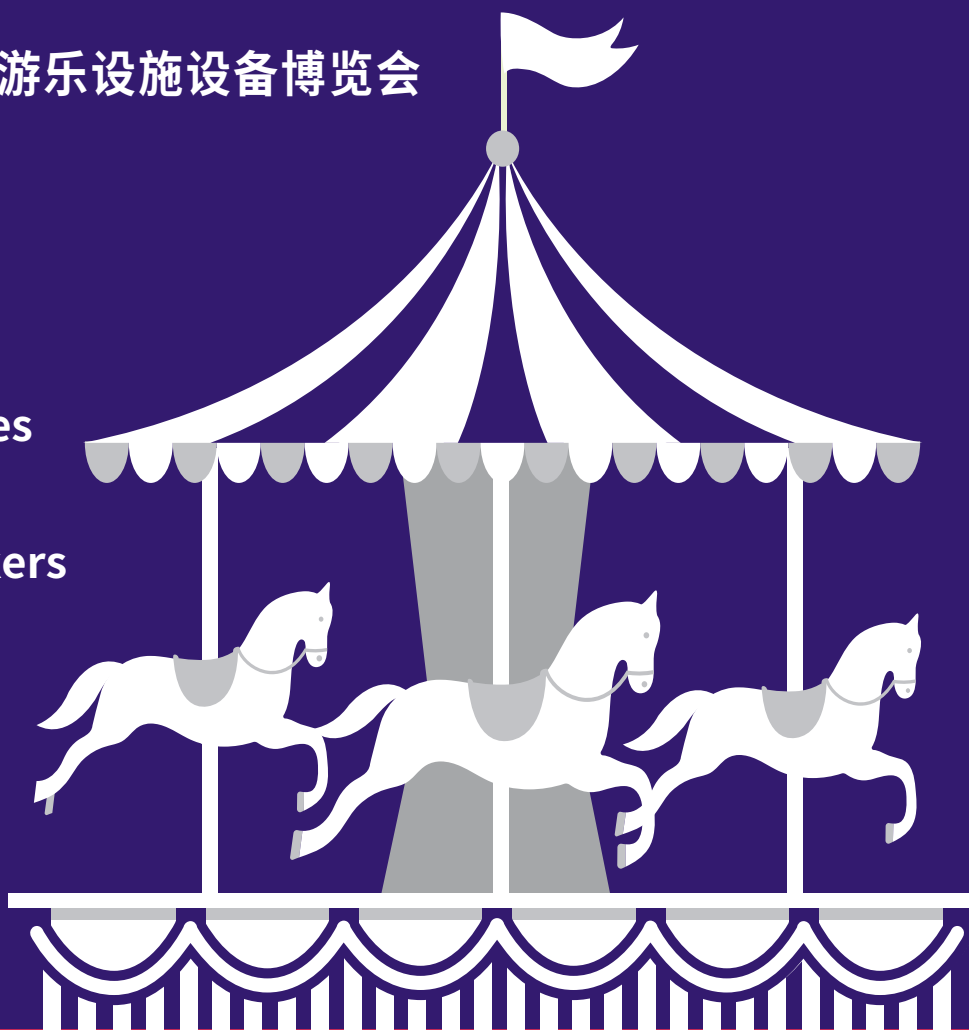
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# Enjoy the ride – dark ride efficiency and optimisation



WHEN considering the design of a new ride, be it a dark ride or any other type of ride, there are obviously many factors to take into account, all of which will impact on the overall popularity and success of an attraction. Alterface's product manager Etienne Sainton outlines a number of areas that should be considered throughout this process.

"Efficiency and throughput are important elements which are defined by the customer at the briefing phase. Another important requirement to consider is that the attraction needs to accommodate increasing visitor numbers for the coming years. Most of the time we get requests for dark rides in existing buildings. The first step is to assess technical and infrastructural issues which have an impact on ride dynamic and duration, but also on the choice of vehicle.

In an article which looks at the design and creation of a ride, Alterface's Etienne Sainton and Benjamin Walravens discuss optimising the efficiency of such attractions, in particular looking at areas such as the queue line, space, throughput, repeatability, durability and more

"For Basyliszek at Legandia, Poland, the building was constructed for the ride so there were less constraints, unless budgetary. And for Popcorn Revenge at Walibi Belgium a building was refurbished, so we had to adjust the ride to the infrastructure. This represented an excellent opportunity to install the non-linear Erratic Ride, which perfectly fits a space with pillars, dead ends and other limitations. Both rides have been awarded with a Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement with limited budget, proving that budget or space should not be a constraint to creativity and building an excellent ride.

Specifically on the space in which a ride might be installed, including the queue line and pre-show areas, Alterface show producer Benjamin Walravens notes that requirements can differ depending on the local and park culture.

"The pre-show can help to set the mood and explain the story and concept of the attraction, define what to do and how to engage in the game," he notes. "This can be done in different ways. Popcorn Revenge features a pre-show with video and posters in the queue area, a gallery with pictures and scoring line-up and a merchandising shop upon exiting – all taking ample space but worth the investment as visitors leave with a good feeling and positive impression.

"In Kinétorium at Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris visitors enter a dedicated room with a pre-show explaining the story and preparing them for the game. This is all very





efficient as it focuses the attention of visitors and makes the waiting more pleasant by building up excitement. A pre-show helps to streamline the boarding, as visitors are aligned towards vehicle capacity. The last thing we want is empty vehicles or overcrowding at embarking."

Dark rides are, of course, more often than not aimed at the family market, which covers a wide age range. So how do ride designers ensure everyone is catered for in such attractions?

Walravens: "The interactivity should be understandable for everyone. It starts with the design of the targets, which should immediately appeal to the audience, fitting local culture and taste. We work with different levels, cartoons for the children and gags for adults. Maus au Chocolat at Phantasialand, Germany, is a perfect example of a family ride with dynamic vehicles but accessible media, an easy theme with competitive gameplay for everyone due to its intensity and simplicity. Dark rides like Justice League, where Alterface installed interactivity for Sally, include more motion-based dynamics and FX features like flames, an adult media style and spectacular shooting. These are in parks with attractions more geared towards an adult audience."

Throughput in any ride is always another vital aspect of the design process and not surprisingly Sainton points to the capacity of the ride vehicles as having a major impact on this element.

"Beyond vehicle choice and duration of scenes, we do have some techniques to overcome design constraints and still obtain a sufficient throughput," he says. "For Bazyliśzek

at Legandia we used a station with two independent platforms, saving time at boarding and upon leaving the vehicle. Another option is to dispatch the first vehicle when ready to reduce pressure on visitors, while maintaining the flow.

"For Popcorn Revenge we introduced a major innovation with the Erratic layout, whereby a loaded vehicle is sent

to a waiting position until the first scene starts. This way we create a 'loading window' which allows an alternating duration of each scene throughout the entire dark ride. Vehicles can then wait a few seconds longer and avoid losing an entire cycle. It allowed Walibi to achieve an optimum throughput from the first day of operation."

When it comes to repeatability, again this is an area ride designers naturally work hard to maximise, be it on a dark ride or another ride attraction, and naturally interactivity plays a key part in this. "Interactivity is the key aspect when it comes to repeatability," Walravens confirms. "At Walibi Belgium many visitors will take the Popcorn Revenge ride again at least once and very often even more, depending on wait times. There is so much to see and experience on the screens that you just cannot capture it all in one ride. The story is built in a multi-dimensional manner with different layers, allowing a certain evolution. Competitive players can be challenged to improve their score and make progress. To this end, Alterface always includes a hall of fame at the end of each game, with individual and highest scores."







Durability and longevity are obviously other important factors for operators and Sainton explains the considerations required in this area from both a designer's and operator's point of view.

"Alterface dark rides are very sustainable. Maus au Chocolat is 10 years in operation and still one of the top attractions in Phantasialand, continuing to receive yearly awards from park fans," he states. "Using advanced technology and a future proof story is important when designing and setting up the attraction. In theory it is also possible to change or upgrade the media content, as long as it fits the overall dark ride theming. We rely heavily on information technology and have a dedicated department for hardware and software management. Our team needs to identify and replace, or even produce, essential parts quickly as we have maintenance contracts which often span several decades."

As we know, intellectual properties (IPs) are used throughout the industry today more than ever before and have played a big part in Alterface's activities of late. The company's own Popcorn Revenge IP, which it created in-house, is being widely promoted and has proved a popular option for Walibi Belgium in its themed Popcorn Revenge dark ride. But is it always necessary to incorporate an IP into a dark ride or can simpler theming be just as effective in drawing the crowds?

Walravens explains: "An IP can provide an emotional connection with people and create engagement," he says. "Disney and Universal are strong in IPs and characters that are popular from movies, reinforcing this

in the theme parks and attracting the fan community. A popular IP will not only be very expensive but has a lot of restrictions and limitations as the IP owner carefully watches over the nature of the characters, their actions and even facial expressions. Especially regional parks therefore often create a proprietary IP, like we did with Popcorn Revenge for Walibi Belgium. It opens more opportunities for merchandising and visualisation across the park, but it also takes more effort to get visitors acquainted with it and create a dynamic to bring it alive. It's most important to look at what appeals to the visitors and fit the IP into the overall park theming to reach a good balance."

## About the authors

**Benjamin Walravens** is an attraction designer and show producer in the theme park industry. From a 3D animator position at Alterface for pre-rendered and real-time content, he moved to designing interactive attractions, hereby merging storytelling and gameplay into a coherent and immersive experience. Walravens also supervises the outsourced media and theming production of turnkey attractions, co-ordinating show control, lighting and media integration with all involved parties.

**Etienne Sainton** has been passionate about storytelling and the theming industry from his childhood. He studied software engineering in France and then moved to Belgium to work for Alterface. His first years in the company have been dedicated to dark ride production and management. As product manager he now defines and positions the solutions which Alterface delivers to the entertainment industry.





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# Anjo World opens in the Philippines



THE end of November last year saw the grand opening of Anjo World in the Philippines, a new park in which many of the rides were supplied by the Chinese company Jinma (Golden Horse).

Among these were the Super Spinning Coaster ZXC-4D, Frisbee, carousel, tea cups, Go Go Bouncer and Space Shuttle and Jinma (Golden Horse) representatives have reported on an excellent co-operation with the park in all aspects of the project, from the pre-delivery process right through to installation and commissioning. And judging from the popularity of the rides, guests are enjoying them too!

The Super Spinning Coaster is one of the key attractions at the park and one of the most popular attractions in the Jinma (Golden Horse) product range. The attraction covers an area of just 53.5m x 30m but packs in all the fun and excitement riders would expect to find on such a ride. It features five free-spinning cars with each one incorporating four inward facing passenger seats.

At the beginning of the ride, passengers are taken up to a platform via a chain lift, from where their vehicle is released and the fun begins! The trajectory of the 392m long track is well configured and compact and features

banked curves, spirals, rings, inversions and many more fun elements throughout its entire length. Furthermore, passengers get the added bonus of the vehicles spinning as they go, the spins being carefully controlled so that an enjoyable and comfortable, but hugely fun, experience is provided. Indeed, the base of the vehicles has been designed to maximise passenger comfort during the entire journey.

The track height on the Super Spinning Coaster is 17.1m, while the lift height is 16.6m. The ride cycle is just over one and a half minutes and hourly capacity is 720 riders.

The popularity and success of Anjo World has already been recognised, with the park being awarded Best Family Destination in the Best of Cebu Awards 2019.

## About Jinma

Jinma (Golden Horse), established in 2007, is a high-tech enterprise specialising in the development, manufacture and sale of amusement rides. The company supplies a variety of attractions, ranging from large rides such as roller coasters, water rides and Ferris wheels, to various medium size and small flat rides.

With many years of accumulation of technology and experience in the sector, Jinma (Golden Horse) has gained competitive advantages in the supply market in terms of creativity, planning, research and development, core technology, product quality, brand and service and has emerged as the largest ride manufacturer in China.

In December 2018, Jinma (Golden Horse) launched its IPO and was listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange, becoming the first publicly traded company in China's amusement manufacturing industry.





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# Leisure and retail – a match made in retail heaven



Nathalie Depetro

Nathalie Depetro, director of MAPIC, shares her thoughts on how consumers' desire for richer experiences in shopping spaces is affecting the retail industry and how leisure is shaping entire cities and regions

THE transformation of retail seems to be at a never-before-seen pace. This is especially true with regard to consumers' needs and wants, which have evolved alongside changing lifestyles, new demographics and the impact of the digital revolution. Modern customers are said to be hyper-connected and over-solicited – and no longer come to physical shopping destinations with the sole purpose of purchasing goods, but rather to discover greater enjoyment through new and personalised experiences.

They want to be surprised, amazed and amused and they expect to discover real emotions, connections and experiences. As a reflection of this change in habits, retail sites have begun to evolve from supply shops to urban places that compliment home and work space and that have the potential to be places where consumers come together to connect.

So, what are the long-term implications of these new customer habits for retail developers and landlords? The simple answer is that there is a need for them to provide an experience that makes the customer's trip to their scheme worthwhile. CBRE and Cushman and Wakefield agree that, in the future, 50 per cent of the commercial mix will need to be made up by food and beverage and leisure.

Several prominent retail projects plan to follow this formula and leisure will be the component that truly makes the projects stand out and act as huge magnets for attracting tourists to cities. These projects include the newly opened American Dream in the US, which has a theme park, ice rink, waterpark and indoor ski centre, in addition to over 450 shops, and intu Costa del Sol in Spain, due to open in 2023 with over 20 different leisure attractions planned.

But leisure does not just help draw customers and boost footfall; it can also have a positive impact on the traditional retail elements of a retail centre – recent research from Leisure Development Partners in partnership with MAPIC,

showed that bringing a leisure concept into a retail space increases its footfall by two to four per cent and the retail spend by between two and 16 per cent.

Meanwhile, retailers are drawing on an entire range of leisure activities –from catering, wellness, cinema, theatre, culture and music to sports, virtual reality, e-games, entertainment, attractions and events – to reinvent themselves and offer a unique, differentiated shopping environment. We are also seeing that brands are increasingly offering the customer something extra in-store, which can include cafés, entertainment areas and digital initiatives such as augmented reality. We have recently seen such initiatives from the likes of Sephora and Tommy Hilfiger.

Now, some might ask whether this growing need for more experience is a fad or a fundamental trend. Personally, I prefer to use the expression fundamental wave. It is already affecting commerce and commercial property in and around city centres and from there it will spread to entire cities and their surrounding regions. It will influence the way people think about the role of shopping and leisure in cities as a whole and thus become increasingly important.

It is for this reason that we decided last year to launch an event fully dedicated to the theme of leisure in retail and following the success of MAPIC Leisure Day 2019, Reed MIDEM has announced the launch of LeisurUp, a dedicated event welcoming the entire leisure industry in order to build vibrant live experiences for spaces and places.

LeisurUp is a new international two-day event for leisure professionals. It will take place on November 16 and 17 this year in a new exhibition area next to the Palais des Festivals in Cannes. The first LeisurUp will be co-located with MAPIC 2020 (November 17 to 19) and will include a dedicated exhibition area, conference programme and networking events. 2,500 participants are expected to attend this first edition.



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# New dining experiences served by old technology can leave a sour taste

By Mel Taylor, CEO, Omnico



If you have invested in exciting new menu items or a space-station restaurant experience, make sure your guests get to enjoy it all easily and quickly. Research into the eating habits of 2,000 US theme park visitors found that a lack of fast, easy access to food and drink generates a real sense of frustration in 93 per cent of respondents.

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) said trying out new restaurants or new recipes for food and drink was an important aspect of their visit. But nearly half (47 per cent) said they were frustrated by having to wait in line.

After investing time, capital and creativity into exciting new menus and environments, it's easy for destinations and theme parks to overlook ordering, queuing, paying and delivery. If you continue using the same track when you have bought a high speed train, don't be surprised if you come off the rails. The excitement around food and beverage will disappear, with parks and destinations unable to recoup their investment so quickly.

## Guests like apps and kiosks

Guests want innovation that removes frustrations – and they have their own ideas about what works.

More than half of those (57 per cent) in the research, for instance, believe kiosks and phone apps could eliminate

queuing or waiting. More than three quarters (77 per cent) like kiosks because they make ordering and paying much faster and easier. The ability to order ahead with an app or kiosk makes it more likely your food will be available as you arrive. There's another advantage too, for Gen Z. In the research, more than a fifth of visitors in the 16-24 age group said they were attracted to kiosks because they involve no conversation with members of staff. Kiosks also enable guests to keep on ordering and accessing information when their phones have run out of battery power.

With the right hardware, software and location, kiosks will certainly ease ordering in busy quick-service locations – and boost sales. It's why, for example, McDonald's is planning kiosks in 6,000 US stores.

## Convenience is everything

Other findings in the research only serve to reinforce the centrality of convenience. Three quarters (75 per cent) of guests said having food delivered directly to them wherever they are in a park would "definitely improve" their visit, for example.

More than two thirds (67 per cent) said a park's bespoke phone app would make life easier through advance-ordering. In many cases respondents said this was because ordering on your own phone doesn't mean you get hassled by other guests or staff. More than a quarter (27 per cent) also liked apps because they give quick and accurate access to loyalty programmes and points.

## Meal deals

The research also revealed how parks and destination operators are failing to make full use of meal deals before guests arrive. Meal deals enable guests to order and pay for their eating and drinking requirements in advance and are attractive to visitors who want more certainty or are more budget-conscious. Disney and Universal already use them. Despite this, just 45 per cent of visitors were aware of meal plans and only 39 per cent have used them.

However, the research found 78 per cent of guests are ready to buy meal plans if they come as part of a package with loyalty points that can be spent in the park. The clear advantage of meal deals for operators lies not just in



getting the money up-front, but also improved resource allocation and overall planning.

### Loyalty programmes

Operators also need to use loyalty programmes much more effectively. The key to their uptake is having points or rewards that are instantly accessible so that guests know where they stand, see what they have built up and don't have to go through a lot of rigmarole before they can spend them. Being able to see loyalty points easily is one of the reasons respondents said they like kiosks.

### Conclusion

Overall, then, the research, which was conducted right across the US, demonstrates very clearly that visitors become frustrated when the excitement promised in exotic or hi-tech dining experiences is destroyed by queuing, slow service and opaqueness about the options. Resorts, destinations and theme parks all urgently need to implement new technology so ordering, queuing, payment and delivery match the excitement of new dining and food experiences.



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# The guest service ‘elephant’



Image courtesy  
Walibi Rhône Alpes

I ALWAYS try to see the good in things, but as a trainer, presenting in front of audiences, there is usually what's called 'an elephant in the room.' Kind of like a dentist would probably feel that most of his or her patients don't like going for their appointment but do it out of necessity.

Depending on the advice you get, it's either good to call out the elephant in the room, or bad. But if it's going to lead to good, then why not? I know whenever someone is in front of me there are up to four things on their mind. They think that they won't learn anything new; that the training is a personal attack on them; it's a simple topic that doesn't need this much time spent on it; and that getting everyone together in one room to talk about service is excessive.

If we look at each of these 'elephants' as points on a compass, they would fit in to the north-west-south-and east headings: nothing new; what's wrong; simple stuff; and excessive exercise, and in this article I will expand on each in detail.

What's important to pay attention to here is how you feel when reading the 'decisions' under each heading. You are obviously a leader in the attractions industry and if you work in attractions, you know that guest

service is important. But just because you do, it doesn't mean everyone else in your organisation feels the same way. I think one of the easiest decisions to make is to pay for and implement guest service training in your attraction. However, if there's an elephant in the room, it's highly likely that any efforts will be futile. Therefore, prior to any guest service programme at your attraction, it is important to make these four decisions first.

## Nothing new

I can't guarantee it, but I'm going to take a pretty big punt. Broadly speaking I don't think service has changed in thousands of years. I mean customer service as a job role and industry started post the industrial revolution, with the introduction of call centres in the 1960s centralising many operations – but the concept of serving customers hasn't changed.

I think that in ancient times, when goods were traded along the River Nile, customer service was practiced. The 'basics' have therefore been heard many times before (and probably over-done to be honest); however that doesn't mean that there isn't anything new to learn, or that things don't change over time.

**Decision:** Can we (or are we open to) learn something new about customer service?

Image courtesy  
Walibi Belgium





## What's wrong?

The moment customer service training is suggested, the first reaction is usually “what’s wrong.” There’s a stigma that one person in the team is dropping the ball, so the whole company or department is subjected to service training to avoid the difficult conversation with the person concerned. Even for the most seasoned service professional, just because they’ve had service training in the past, it doesn’t mean that further improvement isn’t required. Training is never done to get the ‘same old’ as a result – there’s just no point! It’s normal that service levels can veer off course and service training can serve as the gentle reminder to get back on track. Imagine if you were navigating and were off course by one degree. Initially you wouldn’t be out by much, but if you maintained your course, think about how far away from your destination you would be.

**Decision:** Are there areas that could use some improvement with our customer service?

## Simple stuff

When people say that “service is fluff” (which should read “service is hard to define”), I agree. But while it is hard to define, when service is missing, it’s noticed! I think because service is hard to define, businesses can get away with saying things like “we pride ourselves on our customer service,” even if it’s not true. The most common thing I hear when I tell people what I do is “we’ve done service training – we did it years ago.” Just like it’s one of those things to do once and then forget about it. So service gets put in the too hard basket, but if you asked the same people about service, they would say it’s all “simple stuff.” If service is so simple, why do we still experience bad service then? Just because the concept of service is simple it doesn’t necessarily mean that it’s easy to get right.

**Decision:** Do we need some help to get service right more often?

## Excessive exercise

Yes it can be. People and organisations that focus on service merely to tick a box, or to get it over and done with, see it as an excessive exercise. But often there is a disconnect to ‘why’ service training is done. Not in terms of the benefits that it will yield but why it’s important to the organisation. If participants can’t see that service is an integral part of the heart and DNA of the business then there is a long way to go for improvement. Before any form of service training is done there should be key links drawn between the training and why it’s important to the business.

**Decision:** Is guest service an integral part of our attraction’s DNA (do we truly believe in and see the value in this)?

If you have answered yes to all of the questions above, then you’re ready to go ahead. If you’ve said no, that’s ok – but realise it might be premature to embark on a huge guest service programme. It’s important to revisit the questions of concern and see how you can get past them. Now is definitely the right time to get into this, as northern hemisphere attractions are moving towards the peak summer season and as southern hemisphere attractions wind down and look at how they can make improvements on the year before.

*Chris Smoje is a customer service speaker, trainer, facilitator and founder of the DIME™ Customer Service approach. Chris works with organisations and their people to develop a common interest and excitement about delivering exceptional customer service results.*

[www.dimecustomerservice.com](http://www.dimecustomerservice.com)

Image courtesy  
Warner Bros. Movie  
World Australia





# Djurs Sommerland, Denmark

PARKLIFE

DJURS Sommerland was established in 1981 by Ole B. Nielsen and Børge Godsk Jensen who had envisioned creating an activity park in Denmark's Djursland in East Jutland.

Today the venue is Scandinavia's largest summer land and an amusement park of international standing and recognition.

At the time of its opening, the concept of a summer land was far from established among the Danish population but the two founders sensed that something was going to happen and that this situation would change as Danes were increasingly demanding a wider selection of holiday and leisure activities.

At the same time, East Jutland was experiencing an increase in the number of tourists coming to the area, but these visitors lacked an option for something to do on days when the weather was not good enough for spending time at the beach – a place where the entire family could enjoy fun experiences.

Nielsen and Jensen therefore began their search for a suitable piece of land on which to create an activity park. Their dream was a place in the southern part of Djursland but unfortunately this wasn't feasible. As a result, the choice fell to the area of Nimtofte in the centre of Djursland, the location chosen turning out to fit perfectly with Djurs Sommerland's future development, with its focus on new rides and expansion. At this time the park covered approximately 20 acres, of which five were used for parking. Today the total area covered has more than doubled to approximately 45 acres.

And in their first year the partners' greatest expectations were exceeded when they attracted 100,000 to their park during the season.

"The interest was overwhelming," explains managing director, Henrik B. Nielsen. "At the time the concept of entertainment by keeping active was a ground-breaking idea. Activities such as archery, rowing in small boats and obstacle courses characterised the offer. In popular terms – no pain, no gain. This was the driving concept for Djurs Sommerland throughout the 1980s."

As additional attractions were added over the years, one major development was the opening in 1985 of Vandaland, an aqua park which today offers guests a host of waterslides and attractions, including some of the latest available, in addition to various F&B outlets. It was the first such park in the country.

However, Djurs Sommerland's guests gradually came to demand faster and newer rides and larger mechanical rides became a natural part of the summer land's experience.





"Previously we had one single mechanical ride, but from the start of the 1990s, there was a clear expectation of more, larger and slicker rides," says Nielsen. "The concept of what a summer land should provide became wider. A new experience dimension was added."

As a result, the Colorado River log flume opened in 1991, this now being part of Wild Asia which opened as the park's newest themed area in 2019. Afrikaland opened in 1993 and today features attractions such as the Kannibal Gryderne and Abekatten family round rides and the Junglesti and Mini Junglesti, both jungle themed obstacle courses for different age groups.

The Rio Grande Rafting was added in 1998, this subsequently becoming part of the Westernland themed area which made its debut in 2007 and now also includes the Wild West Karrusellen, Buffalo themed bumper cars and mini bumper cars, a playground and the Pony Expressen ride.

The 1990s were also the decade in which the brothers Henrik B. Nielsen and Michael B. Nielsen took over the helm of the park from their father, Ole B. Nielsen, and since then the amusement park has gone from strength to strength. Djurs Sommerland was constantly extended throughout the

1990s and 2000s with more and more rides, while at the same time the park has carried out specific work to give the rides an extra dimension.

"In addition to keeping our finger on the pulse and understanding the public's expectations, it has been important for us not just to set up a new, large ride but also to include it within a larger story. We would like to give guests an experience in addition to just butterflies," explains Henrik B. Nielsen. The result of this way of thinking has been the division of the park into the current nine different themed areas, each with their own consistent appearance.

2002 saw the addition of Thors Hammer, a Viking themed family roller coaster from Gerstlauer, the park's first large coaster attraction, while in 2004 the Speedy Gonzales waterslide attraction, in which two passengers race down waterslides together in rafts, was added. Two years later, a Huss Topple Tower named Ørnen was added, this being closed in 2018.

Denmark's largest coaster, Piraten, opened at the park in 2008 as part of the newly created Piratenland which debuted in the same year and now features attractions such as Skatteøen, northern Europe's largest water coaster





# PARKLIFE



which opened in 2011 when the area was doubled in size, the Piratfisker flume ride, the Sølken round ride, the Sablen tower ride and the Det Skøre Kompas swinging pirate ship.

In 2013 Denmark's longest coaster, the double launch ATV (all-terrain vehicle) themed Juvelen from Intamin, opened in Mexicoland, while the following year another themed area, Vikingeland, made its debut, featuring two new rides, the pirate ship Drageskibet and the "pull up" towers attractions Vikingetårnene. The area also now incorporates the Thor's Hammer coaster, water bikes and canoes.

2015 saw the opening of the Bondegårdsland area with 10 new rides aimed at younger visitors and their families, while two years later another major roller coaster was added in the shape of Dragekongen from Intamin, the fastest and longest family suspended coaster in Europe with a track length of just over 2,706ft and a maximum speed of almost 53mph.

Two more family attractions made their debut in 2018 with the addition of the Safaribussen, a Crazy Bus from Zamperla, and the Jungle Rally family coaster from Zierer, while last year the park added Denmark's largest Gyo Swing ride, from Intamin, in the shape of Tigeren in the Wild Asia area. It also became the fastest and highest ride in Djurs Sommerland's history.

The final themed area to be mentioned is Sommerland, which incorporates a range of interactive and active attractions for young guests. Among these are the Djurs Expressen train ride, the Trampoliner, Bouncy Cushion, the Klatrebjerget climb and slide attraction, the Edderkoppe net which offers climbing, creeping and crawling fun and the soap bubbles attraction.

As well as the various rides and attractions on offer, guests can also avail themselves of the many different F&B outlets available at the park which provide a mix of





culinary offerings to suit most palettes. Among these are Grillbuffet, Pizzabuffet, Joe's Burger and Spareribs Buffet, the Pirate's Food Market, Mr. Jackson's Burgerhouse, Coachman's Kebab, Don Pedros Tortillabar, the Kenya Cantine and the Pirate's Coffee Shop, while barbecue packages are another option. Guests can also bring their own barbecue food to cook on the park's barbecues or alternatively can bring picnics and make use of tables and benches located in the park's various "green oases."

In addition to the main summer season, the park's Magic Halloween event has grown to be a very successful "season" of the year, according to Nielson. "The entire park is heavily decorated and we do different (family) haunted houses," he explains, adding that at the moment there are no plans to open the park for other seasons of the year, such as Christmas.

Clearly, then Djurs Sommerland has developed substantially since its early days but perhaps most notably so since 2008, from when the park moved into something of another "gear" as far as the addition of new attractions is concerned. More than €65m has been invested in new rides and improvements in the park since 2008. From that time until now it has installed a wide range of major attractions and has continued to develop with additional themed areas and other attractions more suited to families and younger guests.

The success of this ongoing development is reflected in the park's increasing visitor numbers which from 528,000 in 2008 have gradually gone up year by year, with the 2018 season seeing 818,000 visitors come to the park.



The average length of a visit to Djurs Sommerland is 7-8 hours.

"Over the years we have seen Djurs Sommerland develop into an attraction with a national reach, but we are also seeing an increasing number of foreign tourists," notes Nielson. "These are mainly from the Scandinavian countries, but also the Netherlands is showing growth."

Today the park employs 50 permanent and 600 seasonal "enthusiastic colleagues" as Neilson describes his staff, the season running from the end of April/ beginning of May through to the month of October.



## At a glance

Founded in 1981

100,000 visitors in the first year

Covers approx. 45 acres today

Scandinavia's largest summer land

Over 800,000 visitors each year

Average length of stay is 7-8 hours

Over €65m invested since 2008

[www.djursommerland.dk](http://www.djursommerland.dk)



## Louis Alfieri



### Louis Alfieri, Raven Sun Creative

**InterPark:** Can you provide a brief outline of your time in the attractions industry and the positions you've held?

**Louise Alfieri:** In 1993, after graduating from the Ringling College of Art and Design, I opened Exoscope Design and Fabrication. I went on to work as a production manager at the Nassal Company and then as a project manager at Universal's Islands of Adventure. In 2001, I

became the global project director for Adirondack Studios. That led to me taking the role of creative director for Universal Creative where I oversaw projects for Universal Studios Japan and others around the world like Transformers: The Ride 3D for Universal Studios Singapore and Hollywood. In 2012, I founded Raven Sun Creative and began working around the world, with a particular focus on Asia Pacific.



**IP:** What is the history of Raven Sun Creative?

**LA:** I came up through the industry as a craftsperson – sculptor, painter, fabricator – working my way up to supervisor, project manager, global director, senior creative director and producer positions, eventually starting my own company as principal and chief creative officer.

Raven Sun grew out of a desire to do things differently. We want to elevate the art form, incorporating the traditional arts, the latest technology, entrepreneurship, values, multiculturalism and holistic thinking in our product. We've seen a lot of people treated like milk cartons in the location based entertainment (LBE) industry. Many people are uncertain, walking around with expiration dates on their heads. Unlike the film industry, the LBE industry has not adopted a gig mentality, nor does it pay sufficiently to support people moving all over the globe for short term assignments. We felt we could develop a different business model, collecting the best talent in the world and work together to achieve unique solutions, great success and offer people freedom and a sense of security.

**IP:** What are the company's key products and services?

**LA:** We offer owner's representation, consulting services and turnkey design services to brands, owners and developers in the location based entertainment, leisure, resort, retail and mixed-use destination industries.

**IP:** What types of venue does the company work with?

**LA:** We work with destination owners, brand owners and emerging markets. We serve a variety of sectors in location based entertainment – theme parks, mixed-use destinations, retail, museums, cultural sites, interventions, events, leisure, resorts/hotels and luxury-branded residential/hospitality.

**IP:** What would you say makes Raven Sun Creative stand out from other suppliers of similar services and solutions?

**LA:** Our experiences, backgrounds and perspectives allow us to arrive at solutions that others do not. We also look at things holistically. We will

recommend owners to our competitors if we feel we are not the right fit for the project.

**IP:** What are your USPs?

**LA:** We have hands-on extensive experience at every level of the project pipeline around the globe.

We are a holistic company.

Our creatives, thinkers, producers, managers and craftspeople approach every project from a series of vantage points others do not

possess or offer. Our team invents things that have never been done before and successfully realise them. We are creative entrepreneurs and have employed a globally distributed talent model from day one of the company. Our employees and talent resources are positioned all over the globe, coming from different cultural backgrounds, with unique skill sets, international work experiences and of varying age groups.





# Open to Question



**IP:** Can you provide a few details of two or three of the company's most recently completed projects or some you are currently working on?

**LA:** Hersheypark's Reese's Cupfusion – complete design solutions and owner representation; Evergrande Ocean Flower – executive consultant and owner's representative; Ubisoft/Lamborghini and other brands – executive consultant and brand partner on brands entering the location-based entertainment sector; and Hengdian World Studios – detailed concept design.

**IP:** How does Raven Sun Creative come up with its design solutions? Where do you start with a project and are the ideas you use usually inspired by requests from/the needs of individual operators and developers or do you more often start with a 'blank canvas'?

**LA:** We always start with listening, exploration and questions. We approach every project from a range

of levels, from the 40,000-foot Big Picture to the guest POV to the micro detail. We begin with asking, "What is the emotional impact we want the guest to experience/come away with?" Linked to that: what story do we want to tell to achieve that emotional feeling/memory? We also consider how we can bring something unique and fresh to this storytelling opportunity and what kind of relationship we want to establish with the guests.

We are always keen to explore the brand/owner/ source/essence. It is critical to understand what the brand is, who we are working with, who they are targeting, their mission/vision/values and what their brand value proposition is. The same questions are also crucial for both creating new IP and bringing an existing IP world – full of characters, plots and settings – to life. What is the brand's VP and relationship with its core audience? Are we fulfilling, enhancing or extending that with the story and experience we want to take our audience on? Where





can we take creative risks to provide something new for the guests, audiences and brand? Why does the brand want to do this project and who does the brand want to reach?

From the outset of the creative process, we explore the whole project, including the operational model, the financial model, technical capability, integration and the customer journey before, during and after the experience. These subjects can't be afterthoughts or excluded until later on; they must be part of the design thinking from the very beginning.

We also explore storytelling in equal value across multiple formats – story structure/plots/narrative storytelling, character arcs, visual storytelling, musical storytelling, sound design storytelling, texture storytelling, colour storytelling and visual and audio cue storytelling.

**IP:** What changes and/or trends are you seeing in the parks and attractions industry globally at the present time?

**LA:** We live in remarkable times. I believe a revolution is coming to the LBE industry for a number of reasons.

**1)** The LBE business model is stale and ripe for disruption.

**2)** AR will transform the human condition more so than the smart phone has. Soon, your living room will become the most immersive environment you could ever visit. This will push LBE to offer a new class of experiences to compete with the world becoming a real-time interactive screen environment.

**3)** VR will become a transcendent storytelling opportunity that will transform the cinema landscape and lead to more competition from the in-home entertainment space.

**4)** We believe P3 (People, Planet, Profits) or ESG (Environmental/Social/Governance) bottom lines will become standards for success instead of afterthoughts.

**5)** The coming AI technological revolution is going to sweep over the planet and dramatically change the nature of human work, interaction, knowledge and access to information like nothing that has preceded it. AI will result in changes to humanity's trajectory on a par with fire and the wheel – far greater than medicine, electricity and fossil fuel. This change will have profound implications for all of the above.

## Personally speaking

**Not many people know the following about me ...** I am a practising fine artist trained in the traditional arts. I do raku pottery, fine art sculpting, welding, metal casting, carpentry, electrical, moulding and casting at my studio. (I need to spend more time doing these things!). I've built a couple of cars and buildings from the ground up/scratch by myself. I'm also a massive Godzilla, practical SFX and stop-motion animation fan.

**The most interesting places I've ever been to are ...** Kyoto, Japan, Sanbo-in Temple in Koyasan, Japan, Patagonia, Chile, and the La Galerie de Paléontologie et d'Anatomie in Paris.

**Family aside, the prized possession I value above all others is ...** the dorsal fin off an actual Godzilla suit, which I received on a tour of the Godzilla suit warehouse, and my P&H Kayak

**My favourite films are ...** Akira Kurosawa's *Dreams*, Alex Proyas' *Dark City*, Ray Harryhausen's *Golden Voyage of Sindbad*

**When I'm not working I like to ...** garden, kayak, hike, photograph, create art and music

**The people who have influenced me most are ...** Morris Mitchell and Fiore Custode (two of the best instructors over multiple years at Ringling College of Art and Design)

**My favourite musician/band/music is ...** heavy metal and 70s improvisational electric jazz

**If I could invite a celebrity to dinner it would be ...** Michelangelo/Leonardo Da Vinci/Jules Verne

**My unfulfilled ambition is ...** to be a fine artist unrestricted by financial or social requirements (free to create without worry or need of having to compromise it for need of selling something or requiring validation)

**I really dislike ...** manipulative people and environmental destruction



# Coronavirus – plan for the worst and hope for the best

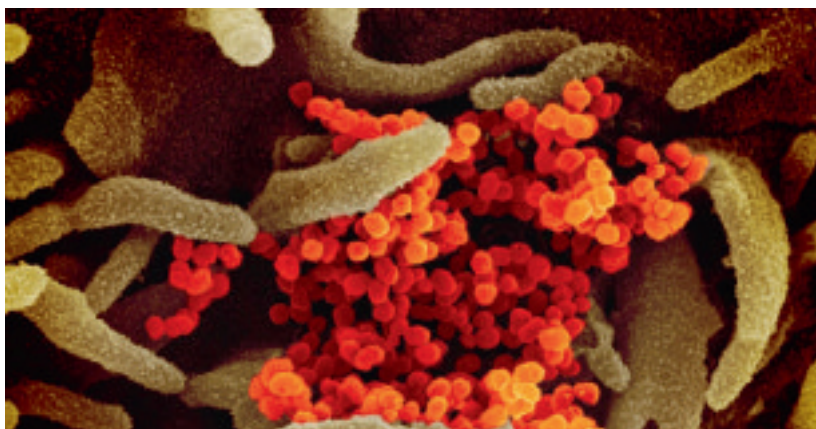


Image courtesy  
Sci-News.Com

IT'S amazing how an issue like the coronavirus can have such a global impact on the leisure industry, from theme parks such as Shanghai Disney, Hong Kong Disneyland, Ocean Park Hong Kong and Chimelong in Guangzhou, China, all who have closed for indefinite periods of time, to cruise lines who continue to see outbreaks of the virus on almost a daily basis, most recently in Iran and also in Japan, Italy and the United States, and which are creating what one expert described as "chaotic infection control" on board some of these ships.

Here in the United States, we are seeing people stay away from Asian restaurants through fears that the workers may have come into contact with other workers from China, Korea and Japan. A form of hysteria, yes, and most likely unfounded. Nevertheless, people all over the world are reacting in strange and different ways.

When the SARS virus occurred in 2003, a pandemic was declared. SARS was the first pandemic of this nature in the 21st century. Many of us forget that the SARS virus, after its initial startup, spread to basically every continent within months of its outbreak. Over 8,000 people contracted SARS



Image courtesy Star Tribune

By Dennis Spiegel

Continuing his series of articles on the attractions industry, International Theme Park Services (ITPS) founder and CEO Dennis Spiegel discusses the coronavirus, how it is impacting the global leisure industry and some of the precautions being advised to help prevent it

and more than 700 people died. Amazingly, it appears that the coronavirus is going to eclipse the SARS virus. In China alone, over 2,000 people have died and over 75,000 cases have already been verified, with over 15,000 people recovered from the flu. People who have recovered are donating their blood plasma to help fight the virus. Early signs have shown that their blood plasma is beneficial to people still fighting the disease.

Sporting events, political summits, trade shows and many other events have and continue to be cancelled or postponed. It is not yet known how long the coronavirus will continue to spread, while attempts to control it also continue to spread around the world. Universities in China and South Korea are putting forth programmes to disinfect dormitories and other large areas used for public gatherings. Airports are detoxifying daily and some airlines completely spray down their aircrafts with antiseptic upon arrivals.

Just this week (at the time of writing), in the midst of China attempting to control and contain the virus, politics came into play in a major way when three Wall Street Journal reporters were ordered to leave China – two Chinese US Nationals and one, an Australian, for being associated with a story perceived by the Chinese government as racially discriminatory and sensational headlines such as "China is the real sick man of Asia." But these three journalists were not responsible for the article; the piece was written by a Bard college professor, Walter Russell Mead. Nevertheless, politics "kicked in" and somebody had to be penalised, rightly or wrongly. They were given five days to leave China.

Keep in mind that while none of us in the leisure industry want to languish in the thought of the coronavirus hanging around long enough to affect our primary tourist season,



summer 2020, the SARS virus did remain around for over eight months before it disappeared. That eight-month schedule, when applied to the coronavirus, would indicate that this virus could still be plaguing us into September and possibly October 2020!

So, what do we do? We take every precaution possible to inform guests of the preventative steps to be taken to avoid COVID-19 – procedures such as continuing to wash hands frequently using alcohol-based rubs, cleansing and washing hands after toilet use, before eating and after coughing or sneezing, disposing tissues into closed bins after use, cleaning and sterilising your cell phone and avoiding allowing other people to use it, avoiding using other people’s utensils, keeping children close to you to avoid separation and avoiding contact with animals that exhibit signs of sickness. It sounds silly, but these are all necessary steps to help reduce contamination.

There are many ways and approaches to help ensure you or your guests take the correct steps to prevent and avoid coming in contact with the virus. Tell guests, should they become ill while visiting your venue, to notify the attractions first aid facility immediately. This may sound scary, but could lessen the chance of contracting the virus.

We live, work and recreate in different times in today’s world. Preparedness for all types of situations lies at the feet of attraction operators who receive hundreds, thousands and millions of visitors each year. Remember that for the first time ever, annual attendance at themed attractions globally has topped 500 million! That’s a lot of people coming into contact with one another in many different ways. Sterilising, cleansing and anti-bacterial strategies may very well be “the way of the future,” becoming a familiar adjunct to parks of all types, all over the world.

To tackle the issue as it relates to your operation and in order to gather pertinent information, you can contact the World Health Organisation for updates and for suggestions and procedures to help your facility get ahead of the coronavirus prevention curve.

Some park operators I have already spoken with about their preparedness for this coming season, have indicated that they have set up temporary internal task forces to watch over this topic. One said, “nothing would make us happier than to see this preparedness never have to be activated, but we will be ready in the event this situation manifests itself and becomes worse.”

Let’s all take the position of “planning for the worst and hoping for the best” as it relates to this subject. It never hurts to be prepared and ready to use preventive procedures.



Image courtesy Orlando Weekly

**Dennis Speigel** is founder and CEO of International Theme Park Services (ITPS), based in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. A past chairman of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), he has over 50 years of experience in the theme park and leisure industry. Since its inception in 1983 ITPS has worked on over 500 projects in 50 countries and is uniquely qualified to assist in all aspects of entertainment project development.

[www.interthemepark.com](http://www.interthemepark.com)



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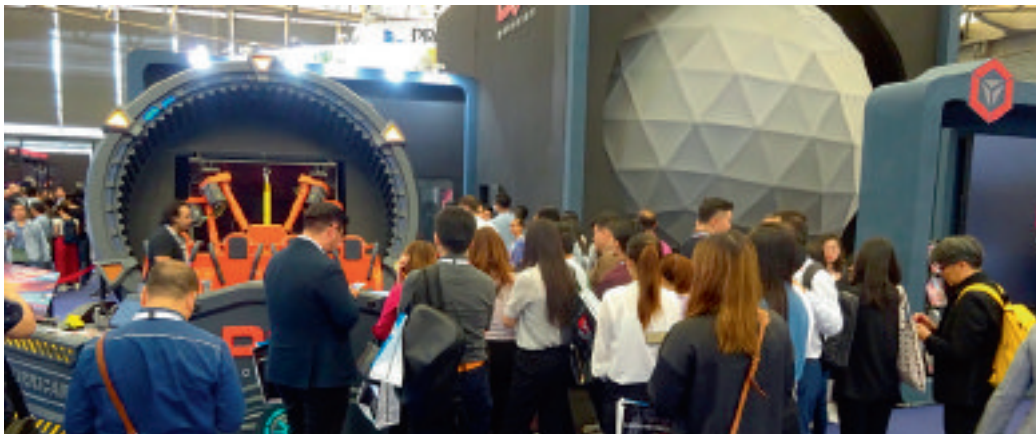
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# Venetian Macao due to host IAAPA Expo Asia



THIS year's IAAPA Expo Asia is scheduled to take place at the Venetian Macao in Macao, China, from June 9 to 11 and at the time of writing IAAPA was still moving forward with plans for the event, despite the on-going coronavirus situation (the IAAPA website states that the organisation will make an announcement about the event in mid-March).

IAAPA Expo Asia continues to be one of the key events in the industry calendar and the major trade show for the parks and attractions industry in the region. Attracting manufacturers and suppliers from around the globe and in particular from China and other Asian countries, it is expected to attract a total of approximately 6,000 buyers from the Asia-Pacific region, with total attendance predicted to be over 8,500 from 60 different countries.

Exhibiting companies will again display the familiar, comprehensive array of rides, attractions and services that visitors have come to expect at the show, with products this year including everything from the latest amusement rides, virtual reality attractions and waterpark attractions to motion simulators, video and skill games, food and beverage and theming items.

Again at the time of writing, 314 exhibiting companies were listed on the IAAPA Expo Asia

website as attending (this compares to 429 participating companies in 2019) and it remains to be seen whether or not this number will be impacted in any way in view of the coronavirus outbreak.

In addition to the trade show floor, a conference programme is also planned, beginning on June 8, which will include sessions covering subjects such as operations best practices in Asia, establishing internationally branded theme parks in China, marketing and revenue operations, attraction technologies, waterparks, safety, leveraging IP, crisis management, outdoor adventure attractions, human resources and more.

Also planned is a Leadership Breakfast on the morning of June 10 in the IAAPA Theatre while a Lunch and Learn session will also take place on the same day, both sessions involving keynote presentations from senior members of the attractions industry both in China and elsewhere. An Opening Networking Night event will be held on the evening of the first day of the trade show, while a Young Professionals networking event will take place on the evening of June 11.

For more information and to look out for any announcements from IAAPA about this year's event, visit [www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-asia](http://www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-asia)

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